

THE WISDOM
OF

Ananda
Loomaraswamy

Presented
By
S. Durai Raja Singam
1979



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IN MEMORY OF

Dr. D. Ananda Krishna Coomaraswamy – 26th July 1947 – 10th December 1976 – Issued on the First Death Anniversary (10-12-1977).

1. **T**he Poems of TA'YUMANAVAR,
Translated from the Tamil
by Sir Mutu Coomaraswamy
(500 copies – Free).
2. **A** University Course on Indian Art by Dr. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy
(350 Copies – Free)
3. **T**he Wisdom of Ananda Coomaraswamy. Presented by S. Durai Raja Singam. (350 Copies – Free)

I have published these books at my own cost in memory of my beloved son Dr. Ananda Krishna Coomaraswamy, who was named after Dr. Ananda Kentish Coomaraswamy, and blessed by him on his birth. Our tradition has declared that a literary work is one of the important ingredients of *Sapta Santanas*. Having a son, building a temple, digging a tank, writing a literary work, instituting a choultry, laying a garden, and leaving a treasure trove. They feed the perpetuation of the memory of the departed. Readers are requested not to reprint any of these publications or commercialise them and thus tamper with their sanctity and individuality.

—S. DURAI RAJA SINGAM

THE WISDOM OF ANANDA COOMARASWAMY

being

GLIMPSES OF THE MIND OF
ANANDA COOMARASWAMY



Great Thoughts

Selected from his writings, letters and speeches

Presented by S. Durai Raja Singam

with an Introduction by
Whitall N. Perry

**COOMARASWAMY MUST NOT BE FORGOTTEN,
COOMARASWAMY MUST BE STUDIED AND REMEMBERED**



Born: 26th July 1947
Vaddukodai, Sri Lanka.

Departed: 10th Dec. 1976, London

Dr. Ananda Krishna Coomaraswamy, B.V.Sc. & A.H.
Research Student, Veterinary Field Station, Department of Animal
Husbandry, 'Leahurst', Neston, Wirral, University of Liverpool.

DR. ANANDA KRISHNA COOMARASWAMY, B.V.Sc. & A.H.

The late Dr. Ananda Krishna Coomaraswamy, was born at Vaddukodai, Sri Lanka on 26th July, 1947 and died when he was 29 years old at Whipps Cross Hospital, London, England on 10th December, 1976 after a motor accident on 22nd September, 1976.

He received his early education at the Sultan Abu Bakar School, Kuantan, Malaysia, and later passed his School Certificate in 1964 while at the Anglo-Chinese School, Klang. He completed his Higher School Certificate at the same school. He then proceeded to Mymensingh, East Pakistan (Bangladesh) to pursue a course in veterinary science. His Veterinary education was interrupted as a result of the Indo-Pakistan war and following the war, he went to India and joined the Bombay Veterinary College in 1971 and graduated with a first class degree in May, 1975. He returned to Malaysia and worked (volunteer) in the Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory in Petaling Jaya for three months prior to his departure to the United Kingdom for a post-graduate course in October 1975.

In the United Kingdom he was, from October 1975 a research student in the Department of Animal Husbandry, University of Liverpool, Veterinary Field Station, Neston, Wirral, Cheshire. His progress during this period was such that he was awarded an Agricultural Research Council Research Assistantship from 1st October 1976 to enable him to continue his studies to doctorate level.

The untimely death of Dr. Ananda came as a great shock to his friends and family. His body was flown to Kuala Lumpur and cremated according to Hindu rites. He leaves behind his dear father S. Durai Raja Singam, mother Mrs. Parameswary Durai Raja Singam, two brothers, Gandhikijai Singam and Jawaharalal Jai Singam, and two sisters, D. Chandramani, D. Selvamani, nephews Rabindran, Chandra Mohan and nieces Vathani, Gauri, and Manohari and several relatives to bemoan the loss.

THE MYSTICISM OF ORIENTAL ART is always expressed in definite forms. India is wont to suggest the eternal and inexpressible infinities in terms of sensuous beauty. The love of man for woman or for nature are one with his love for God. Nothing is common or unclean. All life is a sacrament, no part of it more so than another, and there is no part of it that may not symbolize eternal and infinite things. In this great same-sightedness the opportunity for art is great. But in this religious art it must not be forgotten that life is not to be represented for its own sake but for the sake of the Divine expressed in and through it.

from "Essays in National Idealism" by Ananda Coomaraswamy

1910

THE WISDOM OF ANANDA K. COOMARASWAMY

Presented by S. Durai Raja Singam

INTRODUCTION

Whitall N. Perry

One often speaks of the "Greek miracle"; but who ever hears of the miracle of Hinduism, this extraordinary amalgam of Proto-Australoid, Mongolian, Negrito, and notably Dravidian and Aryan cultures anciently established on the Indian sub-continent, that flowered at some cyclical moment prior to recorded history into the brilliant homogeneous spiritual-socio-ethnic system we still know today, and whose essence is the Sanatana Dharma or perpetual Veda? Travelling in India at the beginning of the Christian era, Apollonius of Tyana found that "Pythagoras was anticipated by the Indians". Yet Pythagoras himself antedated the Hellenistic period in question, which so far from being "miraculous" was more truly a waning segment of the Aryan tradition, and which in unison with Roman culture was to father that humanism whose post-Christian and "posthumous vengeance" — in the words of Frithjof Schuon — erupted as the European Renaissance with its civilizationist aberrations culminating in the materialistic, relativistic, and *tamasic* anomalies of our century. This, then, is the background against which Ananda K. Coomaraswamy has so tellingly raised his voice and witness.

Hindu sages proclaim that the eternal Veda will alone endure, being the universal substratum of all religious forms; and in this sense — as well as historically and geographically — Hinduism is providentially situated as a sort of "axis" among world religions; and Coomaraswamy in his turn, given his profound intellectual substance and vision, has been admirably destined through his East-West origins to re-manifest this world-wide nature of the Sanatana Dharma. He brings the Indian heritage to the West, while pointing the West back to her own traditional birthright — Christian and pre-Christian; and the univer-

salinity of this outlook enables him to draw on "all orthodox sources whatever" of the *Philosophia Perennis* to compose a unified world picture of the "normal" order of things, which is the prerogative of no one single people or religion anywhere.

These present extracts of Coomaraswamy's writings, chosen from the heart and judiciously arranged by Sri S. Durai Raja Singam, serve beyond the immediate merit of their didactic message a twofold purpose: they reveal intimate facets of the more personal side of Coomaraswamy; we behold the "structure" of his own thoughts and attitudes and aspirations; we see the man behind the Doctor. And secondly, one cannot fail to hear an appeal of urgent concern — a crucial call to India to remain Indian.

For in the quarter of a century since his death, the ravages he foresaw have devastatingly increased on a global scale; and although one may demur before Professor A.K. Saran's pronouncement that "today there is no *living* Hindu society in India", nevertheless how many contemporary Hindus could pass muster by the criterion of K.V. Rangaswami Aiyangar: "He who rejects Dharmasastra, especially where its dicta rest on Vedic sanction, is not therefore a Hindu"? And Coomaraswamy would certainly be the first to endorse the words of Sri Chandrasekhara Bharati Swamigal, the late Sankaracharya of Sringeri: "It is well known that people everywhere are now suffering. It can be confidently asserted that this suffering dates from their giving up the courses of conduct observed by their ancestors. When the practice of Dharma began to decline, suffering began."

It must be stressed that Coomaraswamy's love for India transcended any political or nationalistic bias, and was based on a veneration for the sacred and the noble in a form that has a genius for translating first principles into scriptures and art patterns haunting in their beauty. I knew the Doctor at the time when India was just gaining independence. He could attend rallies with no taint of "patriotism", as

he told me, since any nationalistic fervour had long since ceded to the *contemptus mundi* of his spiritual detachment — he who had truly learned to find himself, “‘in place’ anywhere, and ‘at home’ everywhere — in the profoundest sense, a citizen of the world”.

It is not hard to see from the allusion to beauty just above, how the genius in the tradition fired the genius in the sage with an impassioned love for art forms, which extended to the principles of art in all traditions. It took Coomaraswamy's acid pen to quash modern society's narcissistic infatuation with “art for art's sake” through the sobering *mise au point* that “the artist is not a special kind of man, but every man a special kind of artist”. Images (icons), he tells us, are not made to be seen (exhibited) but *realized*; thus originally they were not “works of art” but “means (*sadhana*) of edification”. Hence “an image will not represent a moment of time, but a condition of being” (and if we evaluate much contemporary “art” by this criterion, we see that this “condition of being” more often than not is a pathological concatenation of psychic fissures unmasking a wasteland of the soul). Only that is truly beautiful — and real — which accords with revealed and established canons and not with individual fancies.:

This, then, is the Coomaraswamy that Sri Singam presents to us, a portrait of the man shaped in the ardour of his own ideals, his intransigence regarding canons and principles of art, his deep love of and dedication to that true India which modernized Indians would so easily betray in their blind fascination with the West's shabby materialism, and his equally profound understanding of and respect for Platonism and mediaeval Christian culture — as part of the whole Universal perspective to which his heart really belonged. But the stress on India makes this collection of extracts particularly valuable for Indians — Hindus first of all, and Muslims by extension. And since India plays a chosen role among world faiths, we all—Buddhists, Christians, Sikhs, Jinas, Taoists and the rest, will be enabled to find that particular aspect of Coomaraswamy's message which best accords with our own predestined path.

COOMARASWAMY, Ananda Kentish.,
 D.Sc. (London), F.L.S., F.G.S., M.R.A.S.; Fellow for Research in
 Indian, Persian and Muhammadan Art, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston,
 Mass; Fellow of University College, London; Vice-President, India So-
 ciety, London; Hon. Correspondent, Archaeological Survey of India,
 Vrienden der aziatische Kunst, The Hague, Gesellschaft fur Asiatische
 Kunst, Berlin, Coimbra Institute, Hon. Mem., Bhandarkar Oriental
 Research Inst., Poona, etc.; s. of late Sir Mutu Coomaraswamy, Ceylon;
b. 22nd, Aug. 1877; *m.* Dona Luisa Runstein; one s. *Educ.*: Wycliffe
 College, Stonehouse, Glos.; U.C., London. Director Mineralogical
 Survey of Ceylon, 1903-6; initiated movement for National Education,
 teaching of vernaculars in all schools, and revival of Indian culture; Pres.
 Ceylon Social Reform Society with these objects; Pres. Ceylon Social
 Reform Society with these objects; member Ceylon Univ. Association;
 assisted to found India Society, 1910; in charge of Art Section at United
 Provinces Exhibition, 1910-11; writes and lectures on the history of
 Indian art, and general aesthetic, symbolism, and metaphysics. *Publica-
 tions*: Reports on the Geology of Ceylon, 1903-6; Voluspa; Mediaeval
 Sinhalese Art; The Indian Craftsman; Essays in National Idealism; Art
 and Swadeshi; Burning and Melting (with Y. Daud); Selected Examples
 of Indian Art; Indian Drawings, 2 vols.; Visvakarma; Myths of the
 Hindus and Buddhists (with Sister Nivedita); Arts and Crafts of India
 and Ceylon (also French Edition); Vidayapati (with A. Sen); The Taking
 of Toll; Rajput Painting; Buddha and the Gospel of Buddhism; The
 Mirror of Gesture (with K.G. Duggirala); The Dance of Siva (also
 French edition); Portfolio of Indian Art (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston);
 Catalogue of the Indian collections in the Museum of Arts, Boston; an
 Introduction to Indian Art; Pour comprendre l'art hindoue; History of
 Indian and Indonesian Art (also German edition); Yaksas; Les miniatures
 orientales de la Collection Goloubew; A New Approach to the Vedas;
 The Transformation of Nature in Art; Elements of Buddhist Icono-
 graphy; La Sculpture de Bodhgaya; Spiritual Authority and Temporal
 Power, the early Indian theory of government, 1942; Hinduism and
 Buddhism, 1943; Why Exhibit Works of Art? 1943; Figures of Speech
 or Figures of Thought, 1945; Religious Basis of the Forms of Indian
 Society, 1946; Am I my Brother's Keeper?, 1947; articles in leading
 art journals and in Encyclopaedia Britannica. *Recreations*: gardening,
 books. *Address*: Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Mass., U.S.A.; 649
 South Street, Needham, Mass., (*Died 9th, Sept. 1947*).

ANANDA KENTISH COOMARASWAMY (1877 – 1947)


S. DURAI RAJA SINGAM

The mind that Coomaraswamy turned upon life was insatiate, roving like a bee to suck the essence of every blossom of thought or fancy, but unerringly making a bee-line to bear back honey to his wisdom's hive – Joseph T. Shipley.

Ananda Kentish Coomaraswamy was born on August 22, 1877, the only child of Ceylon Tamil lawyer, Sir Mutu Coomaraswamy, and Englishwoman Elizabeth Clay Beeby. Ananda and Elizabeth went to England in 1878, but in 1879, before he was able to join his wife and son in England, Sir Mutu – the first Hindu allowed to the bar in England and the first Asian knighted by the English throne – died in Ceylon. Although Ananda was educated in England, he never forgot his Asian heritage.

Ananda Coomaraswamy's first interest was science. He spent some six years at Wycliffe College in Gloucestershire and then went to the University of London for a B.Sc. in geology and botany with first class honours. He took this knowledge back to Ceylon to head the first mineralogical survey of that area as the Director of Mineralogical Research for Ceylon from 1903-1906. He discovered the mineral thorianite in Ceylon, and he was awarded a D.Sc. degree for his geological studies during this time.

Having returned to the culture of his heritage, Coomaraswamy became interested in a programme of national education in India. He was appalled at what British education was doing to the Asian culture in India. A series of essays about these issues began a long and fruitful career of scholarly and forceful writing.



As part of the culture Coomaraswamy sought to restore, the arts and crafts of India became a focus for him. He toured India extensively in 1910 and collected one of the finest collections of art and crafts ever exhibited. At the United Provinces Exhibition in Allahabad in 1911, Coomaraswamy presented this collection as he was put in charge of the Art Section. In 1917, during World War I, Coomaraswamy took his collection to the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, where he accepted the position of Keeper of Indian Art in the Department of Asiatic, Islamic and Near Eastern Arts. He remained there until his death, September 9, 1947.

Coomaraswamy wrote many fine critiques of art, but more and more he looked to art as a key to understanding metaphysics. He was responsible for some of the finest interpretations of Hinduism, Buddhism, and the religious literature of his culture, as well as interpretations of the spiritual values demonstrated in the artwork of India which have ever been written.

Had he not died in 1947, Coomaraswamy would have retired from the museum and gone to live in the Himalayas in 1948. Already he had begun to turn away from museum activities toward a more spiritual existence. He left undone many works he had planned, and yet from the early scientific studies, to the political articles and books, to the translations of spiritual works and songs, to the critiques of art, and finally to the many works in metaphysical aspects of art and life, Coomaraswamy completed literally hundreds of works, each in his crisp and precise style of scholarly demonstration of truth from source documentation.

ART AND LIFE

Dr. Ananda Coomaraswamy read the following speech, the last of his life, on the occasion of his 70th birthday at Boston on August 22, 1947, a few days before his death on September 9th 1947. The full text of this speech was sent by Kala-Yōgi Ananda Coomaraswamy to me, a few days before his death — S. D. R. S.

I am more than honoured — somewhat, indeed, overcome — by your kindness in being here to-night, by the messages that have been read, and by the presentation of Mr. Bharatha Iyer's Festschrift. I should like to recall the names of four who might have been present had they been living; Dr. Denman W. Ross, Dr. John Lodge, Dr. Lucien Scherman, and Professor James Woods, to all of whom I am indebted. The formation of the Indian collection in the Museum of Fine Arts was almost wholly due to the initiative of Dr. Denman Ross; Dr. Lodge, who wrote little, will be remembered for his work in Boston and Washington, and also perhaps for his aphorism. "From the Stone Age until now, quelle degradingolade"; I still hope to complete a work on Reincarnation with which Dr. Scherman charged me not long before his death; and Professor Woods was one of those teachers who can never be replaced.

More than half of my active life has been spent in Boston. I want to express my gratitude in the first place to the Directors and Trustees of the Museum of Fine Arts, who have always left me entirely free to carry on research not only in the field of Indian art but at the same time in the wider field of the whole traditional theory of art and of the relation of man to his work, and in the fields of comparative religion and metaphysics to which the problems of iconography are a natural introduction. I am grateful also to the American Oriental Society whose editors, however much they differed from me "by temperament and training" as Professor Norman Brown once said, have

always felt that I had "a right to be heard", and have allowed me to be heard. And all this despite the fact that such studies as I have made necessarily led me back to an enunciation of relatively unpopular sociological doctrines. For, as a student of human manufactures, aware that all making is *per artem*, I could not but see that, as Ruskin said, "Industry without art is brutality," and that men can never be really happy unless they bear an individual responsibility not only for what they do but for the kind and the quality of whatever they make. I could not fail to see that such happiness is for ever denied to the majority under the conditions of making that are imposed upon them by what is euphemistically called "free enterprise," that is to say, under the condition of production for profit rather than for use; and no less denied in those totalitarian forms of society in which the folk is just as much as in a capitalistic regime reduced to the level of the proletariat. Looking at the works of art that are considered worthy of preservation in our Museums, and that were once the common objects of the market place, I could not but realize that a society can only be considered truly civilized when it is possible for every man to earn his living by the very work he would rather be doing than anything else in the world—a condition that has only been attained in social orders integrated on the basis of vocation, *svadharma*.

At the same time I should like to emphasize that I have never built up a philosophy of my own or wished to establish a new school of thought. Perhaps the greatest thing I have learned is never to think for myself: I fully agree with Andre Gide that "*toutes choses sont dites deja*", and what I have sought is to understand what has been said, while taking no account of the "inferior philosophers." Holding with Heraclitus that the Word is common to all, and that Wisdom is to know the Will whereby all things are steered, I am convinced with Jeremias that the human cultures in all their apparent diversity are but the dialects of one and the same language of the spirit, that there is a "common universe of discourse" transcending the differences of tongues.

This is my seventieth birthday, and my opportunity to say: Farewell. For this is our plan, mine and my wife's, to retire and return

to India next year; thinking of this as an *astam gamana*, "going home" There we expect to rejoin our son Rama, who, after travelling with Marco Pallis in Sikkim and speaking Tibetan there, is now at the Gurukula Kangri learning Sanskrit and Hindi with the very man, Pandit Vagishvarji, with whom my wife was studying there twelve years ago. We mean to remain in India, now a free country, for the rest of our lives.

I have not remained untouched by the religious philosophies I have studied and to which I was led by way of the history of art, *Intellige ut credas!* In my case, at least, understanding has involved belief; and for me the time has come to exchange the active for a more contemplative way of life in which it would be my hope to experience more immediately, more fully at least a part of the truth of which my understanding has been so far predominantly logical. And so, though I may be here for another year, I ask you also to say "Good bye"—equally in the etymological sense of the word and in that of the Sanskrit *Svaga*, a salutation that expresses the wish "May you come into your own," that is, may I know and become what I am, no longer this man So-and-so, but the Self that is also the Being of all beings, my Self and your Self.



Human culture is a unitary whole, and its separate cultures are the dialects of one and the same language of the spirit.

Ananda Coomaraswamy's favourite quotation from Alfred Jeremias' book "Handbuch der Altorientalischen Geisteskultur", Berlin, 1929, chap XVII, p. 508.

India's Contribution to World Culture

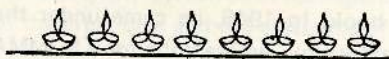
Each race contributes something essential to the world's civilization in the course of its own self-expression and self-realization. The character built up in solving its own problems, in the experience of its own misfortunes is itself a gift which each offers to the world. The essential contribution of India, then, is simply her Indianness; her great humiliation would be to substitute or to have substituted for this own character (*svabhava*) a cosmopolitan veneer for then indeed she must come before the world emptyhanded.

If now we ask what is most distinctive in this essential contribution, we must first make it clear that there cannot be anything absolutely unique in the experience of any race. Its peculiarities will be chiefly a matter of selection and emphasis certainly not a difference in specific humanity. If we regard the world as a family of nations then we shall best understand the position of India which has passed through many experiences and solved many problems which younger races have hardly yet recognized. The heart and essence of the Indian experience is to be found in a constant intuition of the unity of all life, and the instinctive and ineradicable conviction that the recognition of this unity is the highest good and the uttermost freedom. All that India can offer to the world proceeds from her philosophy. This philosophy is not indeed, unknown to others — it is equally the gospel of Jesus and of Blake, Lao Tze and Rumi-but nowhere else has it been made the essential basis of sociology and education.

Every race must solve its own problems and those of its own day. I do not suggest that the ancient Indian solutions of the special Indian problems, though its lessons may be many and valuable, can be directly applied to modern conditions. What I do suggest is that the Hindus grasped more firmly than others the fundamental meaning and purpose of life and more deliberately than others organized society with a view to the attainment of the fruit of life; and this organization was designed not for the advantage of a single class, but, to use a modern formula to take from each according to his capacity and to give to each according to his needs. How far the rishis succeeded in this aim may be a matter of opinion. We must not judge of Indian society, especially Indian society in its present moment of decay, as if it actually realized the Brahmanical social idea; yet even with all its imperfections Hindu society as it survives will appear to many to be superior to any form of social organization attained on a large scale anywhere else, and infinitely superior to the social order which we know as modern civilization.

—ANANDA COOMARASWAMY

THE WISDOM OF COOMARASWAMY



BEING THE GREAT THOUGHTS OF KALA-YOGI ANANDA COOMARASWAMY

S. Durai Raja Singam

Many do not have access to the published writings and speeches of Dr. Ananda Coomaraswamy. The need for a selection of his writings, letters and speeches has therefore long been felt. There are also many who have known him in some field or other of his far-reaching activities who would like to have selected gems of thought from his writings, letters and speeches. The present work is in response to these needs. These selections in thematic arrangement had its beginnings in 1946 and had the blessings of Kalā Yōgi Ananda Coomaraswamy. A typed copy of more than two-thirds of these selections were sent to him for his approval which he readily and kindly gave. When this anthology of selections first appeared 33 years ago, (in a limited cyclostyled edition) it attracted wide interest among general readers as well as students of art and philosophy. These selections of nearly a thousand cover in brief a wide range of subjects and bear witness to Kalā Yōgi Coomaraswamy's wisdom and insight. As one progresses in their study one is often left with a thirst for a fuller and detailed account and one day a complete edition of Kalā Yōgi Coomaraswamy's works must be done.

I wish to thank my friend the late Sri P. Sama Rao B.A. B.L., Advocate, Bellary, India who passed away a few years ago, for considerable help in this work. He has been kind, loyal and most unselfish of helpers in the preparation of this booklet. His suggestions have been so valuable that in a special sense he has become a collaborator. Our friendship was by correspondence and we have never met.

I am grateful to Mr. Whitall N. Perry for his introduction. Coomaraswamy brought me to friends I knew not previously, friends in different lands whom I have never met. Perry's *Treasury of Traditional Wisdom* is a great book. In 1946, he came under the close personal influence of Coomaraswamy, whose hope for a SUMMA of the *Philosophia Perennis* gave the original impetus for this book that fulfilled Coomaraswamy's wish within a quarter of a century of his uttering it.

Kalā Yōgi Ananda Coomaraswamy had an inexhaustibly fertile mind and though he himself declared that life is not long enough for the achievement of many different things, it is the great versatility in his work that strikes us first as we read the varied titles of his vast output. He was proficient in several languages and well-read in all the major religions of the world. Born of an English mother and a Ceylon Tamil father, life itself had probably given him a handicap over lesser mortals like us by freeing him from the risks of narrow provincialism inherent in the concepts of race and nationality. His academic training too was in the sciences, not in the arts as one would have guessed from the interests which he pursued with such dedication and love later in life. His First Class Honours from London was in Biology, not in Art or Literature or Oriental History as one might have imagined. This too probably contributed to the objectivity and clarity so apparent in his work. The thirty years in Boston as Curator of the Indian Section in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts was perhaps the largest single factor which can account for the immense erudition found in his works. But whatever it was that contributed to the greatness of Coomaraswamy's work, the fact remains that Ananda Coomaraswamy is not only one of the greatest minds of our age but also one of the purest spirits of our times. His is the kind of mind that brings together separate areas of knowledge into an almost visionary illumination of the pattern of reality, the "Gods" which underlies the kaleidoscope of life and activity and gives significance to all one's piecemeal explorations in the various "fields of knowledge". "I am wholly convinced," Ananda Coomaraswamy declares in his essay, *The Religious Basis of the Forms of Indian Society*, "that there is one truth that shines through . . . all in many shapes, a truth greater in glory by far than can be circumscribed by any

creed or circumscribed by the walls of any church or temple." These selections have been an attempt to give a glimpse into this great truth which Ananda Coomaraswamy perceived in the hope of luring the reader to a recognition of the great sage and the existence of his work.

The number in brackets after each selection refers to the source where this selection occurs. In some cases where the sources have not been numbered, I have put an asterisk in the brackets after each selection. Much labour has been given to correctness in spelling and punctuation and in case a selection is repeated I regret this lapse. A full list of references of sources for the selections are given for guidance. A first edition of 100 copies were duplicated and sent to admirers of Kalā Yōgi Ananda Coomaraswamy in various parts of the world. I have now been able to bring out this enlarged edition of 350 copies. In my next edition I have thought it best to re-arrange all that Kalā Yōgi wrote or said in chronological order, year by year, so that "one could follow his evolution as a total man" (to use Rajaji's words). This has not been possible now. In fact Kalā Yōgi, wrote to me to omit one selection, for his views on that topic had changed. "I would not say that now", he wrote. "I have used the tools of the present age, that is my scientific training, which I took seriously, to be used without a bias. My life, my work and my understanding follow a sequence and are predominantly logical." One should not judge a saying on a fixed mould of immutability. Readers should also be aware of the fact that when fragments are taken out of context from his writings and speeches he is presented as if he was opposed to this or that.

This book has gone through three mimeographed editions, the first in 1946 and the last in 1972. This is the first printed edition.

I hope, this little labour of love would be recognised. It is not that I desire the crowd to clap but the pity is that our intelligentsia knows so little about Coomaraswamy and does not know what it is missing. His interpretations on various subjects have been so penetrating and true. The debt we owe to Coomaraswamy is not realized by many.



His Scholarly Pursuit

Sketch by S. N. Alandkar

**Extracts from Fragmentary Notes for a Yale University
Lecture (unpublished) on April 13th, 1942**

"Art: remains in artist; a kind of knowledge, how to make Artefact, work of art, thing made by art. E.G. church, book, fishing rod, apple pie, garden. What would any of these be if made, not by art, but by guesswork, empirically? No "fine and applied" *Poiesis*. St. Thomas, Artist not a special kind of man. Artist, maker-by-art; all kinds. Vocation; job. Caste; priesthood; heredity.

To supply need and always for good use. Use does not mean only to make us comfortable or only what is saleable. Not in these terms that "standards of living" to be thought of. Contrary to nature

of arts to seek good of anything but their object; craftsman inclined by justice to seek good of work to be done. Use means consumer's use; patron and artist, piper, tune. Patron knows what, artist how. Use, further, means use of whole man; mind, soul, spirit as well as sensitive carcass (corps, corpse). Consumer judge of art.

Plato contrasts base mechanical arts that serve only body with "fine work" that is related to reason. Not our "fine from applied" or "art from craft" but of skilled from unskilled labour. Gymnastic, music; brutal athlete, tender artist.

Pleasure not a "use". To please, Plato's arts of flattery. Use refers to active or contemplative life; properly, both. Pleasure not a need any more than pain; not these one should seek to understand, but their knower; traditional happiness depends on this knower only, not his accidents. (Psychology deals only with feelings; not art). Pleasure perfects operation. Maker at work should be doing what he likes best. Ceylon craftsmen overtime; "more will be done and better done". Craftsman loves to talk shop; wage earner, baseball, Fallacy of "leisure". Not more leisure, but interesting work, happy.

Man as artist is not a moral being. Is capable only of "artistic sin" (intending one thing, doing another). But *Cum artifex tum vir*. As such responsible for consent to make given object (if coerced by economic necessity to produce adulterated goods or inefficient utensils, is not a free man). Skilled maker of adulterated or dangerous products or poison gas to be condemned as a man.

Manufacture for profit unnatural to artist, who sells only to be able to go on making, while mfr. makes only to be able to go on selling; consumer suffers. Command this stone that it be made bread: what Christ refused, the mfr delights to undertake. Our Ersatz life!

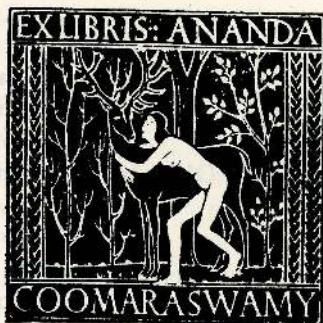
Withering touch of our civilisation. Gulliver. Morris. White man's burden heavy indeed; his task has been one of physical and cultural murder."

—Ananda Coomaraswamy.

Things made by art answer to human needs,

or else are luxuries. Human needs are the needs of the whole man, who does not live by bread alone. That means that to tolerate insignificant, i.e. meaningless conveniences, however convenient they may be, is beneath our natural dignity; the whole man needs things well made to serve at one and the same time needs of the active and contemplative life. On the other hand, pleasure taken in things well and truly made is not a need in us, independent of our need for the things themselves, but a part of our very nature; pleasure perfects the operation, but is not its end; the purposes of art are wholly utilitarian, in the full sense of the word as it applies to the whole man. We cannot give the name of art to anything irrational.

A. K. Coomaraswamy
January 30, 1942



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MESSAGE TO FREE INDIA ON INDEPENDENCE DAY — AUGUST 15th 1947

Be yourself. Follow Mahatma Gandhi, Bharatan Kumarappa, D. V. Gundappa, Abdul Kalam Azad, Abdul Gaffar Khan and Sri Ramana Maharishi. Co-operate with such men as the Earl of Portsmouth, George Bourne, Wilfred Wellock, Jean Giono, Fernando Nobre. Why consider the inferior philosophers? Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.

— Letter to
S. Durai Raja Singam



It is difficult to pigeonhole the universal resonance that sounds throughout Coomaraswamy's writings

—Whitall N. Perry

It is always best to be cautious when quoting these utterances emphasising their contextual origins

—S. Durai Raja Singam

INTRODUCTORY: GEMS OF THOUGHT

Dharma is that morality by which a given social order is protected. "It is by *Dharma* that civilization is maintained" (*Matsya Purana*, cxlv. 27). *Dharma* may also be translated as social norm, moral law, vocation, function, order, duty, righteousness, or as religion, mainly in its exoteric aspects. (52).

The world itself is manifestation and not the handiwork of the Absolute. (3).

It is incorrect to call the soul 'immortal' indiscriminately, just as it is incorrect to call any man a GENIUS. Man has an immortal SOUL, as he has a GENIUS, but the soul can only be immortalised by returning to its source, that is to say, by dying to itself and living to its SELF, just as man becomes a GENIUS only when he is no longer himself. (*).

During many years I have collected from Eastern and Western sources parallel passages in which identical doctrines have been enunciated as nearly as possible in the same term and often, indeed, in the same idioms and making use of etymologically equivalent words; not at all with a view to the demonstration of any literary "influences", but only to show that the doctrines themselves are cognate in the same sense that the etymons, e.g. of Greek and Sanskrit, are cognate, that is to say, of common origin (33).

Literally hundreds of texts could be cited from Christian and Islamic, Vedic, Taoist and other scriptures and their patriotic expositions in close and sometimes literally verbal agreement. (33).

Holding with Heraclitus that the WORD is common to all, and that Wisdom is to know the WILL whereby all things are steered, I am convinced with Jeremias that the human cultures in all their apparent diversity are but the dialects of one and the same language of the SPIRIT, that there is a "Common universe of discourse" transcending the differences of tongues. (11).

Symbolism and imagery (*pratika, pratibimba*, etc), the purest form of art, is the proper language of metaphysics (69).

Ananda is the divine delight in what Eckhart calls "the act of fecundation latent in eternity" (67).

There is one mythology, one iconography and one truth, that of an uncreated wisdom that has been handed down from time immemorial (40).

In the matter of direction towards the Kingdom of Heaven "within you" the modern world is far more lacking in the will to seek, than likely to be led astray by false direction. From the Satanic point of view there could hardly be imagined a better activity than to be engaged in the "conversion of the heathen" from one to another body of dogmas: that surely was not what was meant by the injunction, "Go thou and preach the Kingdom of God", -- or was He mistaken, when He said "The Kingdom of God is within you"? (26).

Perhaps the greatest thing I have learned is never to think for myself (11).

The last end of every human activity is the knowledge of God, and it is our duty to refer all our acts to our last end. (*).

The spirit is the essential aspect in man; it is more valuable, and must be kept mightier, than the sword. (*).

Let us not forget even for a moment that there exists an ultimate universal power which is always within man, and which makes itself known in the world through man. (*).

There is no death of anyone save in appearance only, even as there is no birth of anyone, but in appearance only. For when anything turns away from its Essence to assume a nature there is the notion of 'birth', and in the same way when it turns away from the nature, to the Essence, there is the notion of a 'death', but in truth there is neither a coming into being nor a destruction of *any* essence, but it is only manifested at one time and invisible at another.

This manifestation and invisibility are due respectively to the density of the material assumed on the one hand, and to the tenuity of the essence of the other. (61).

The symbolism of the ferry (Skr. *tirtha* crossing place) coincides with that of the bridge and the ladder. You know the expression "reaching the farther shore" = liberation. The sea or river of *life* flows between *this* shore and *that* shore. One crosses, either by a boat or bridge or ladder: accordingly "as the journey is thought of as a voyage or a climb. So Buddha and Mahavira are *tirthakara* "ferry makers", a word which corresponds in the other symbolism to our pontifex, pontiff "bridge builder", Pali *setu-karatea*. I have collected much material for an article on the "bridge" and some on the "ferry". Amongst Vedic references might be mentioned just x, 30, 14 a prayer to the Asvins, "make ye a crossing place, or ferry (Krtam *tirtham*), ie "be Tirthkaras," and x.53.8 "Stand up and cross over" (*pra tarata*) from same root *tr* as in *tirtha* (62).

Before we can have India, we must become Indians . . . I firmly believe the only service possible to render to the cause of Indian freedom is service to Indian ideas.(75)



We need hardly say that from the traditional point of view there could hardly be found a stronger condemnation of the present social order than in the fact that the man at work is no longer doing what he likes best, but rather what he must, and in the general belief that a man can only be really happy when he "gets away" and is at play. For even if we mean by "happy" to enjoy the "higher things of life," it is a cruel error to pretend that this can be done at leisure if it has not been done at work. For "the man devoted to his own vocation finds perfection . . . That man whose prayer and praise of God are in the doing of his own work perfects himself" (Bhagavad Gita). It is this way of life that our civilization denies to the vast majority of men, and in this respect that is notably inferior to even the most primitive or savage societies with which it can be contrasted. (*).

How many of our "communists", I wonder, realize that the reference of "the common Man", COMMUNIS HOMO, was originally not to the man in the street as such, but to the immanent deity, the very Man in everyman! (*).

To have set about to 'conquer' nature, to have thought of discontent as 'divine', to have honoured the discoverers of 'new wants', to have sacrificed spontaneity to the concept of inevitable 'progress' — these positions of the Social Gospel are none of those that the East had ever thought as making for happiness (57).

Life is a flame, and transmigration, new becoming, is the transmitting of the flame from one combustible aggregate to another; just that, and nothing more. If we light one candle from another, the communicated flame is one and the same, in the sense of observed continuity, but the candle is not the same. (*).

But if Christianity should fail, it is just because its intellectual aspects have been submerged, and it has become a code of ethics rather than a doctrine from which all other applications can and should be derived; hardly two consecutive sentences of some of Meister Eckhart's sermons would be intelligible to an average modern congregation, which does not expect doctrine, and only expects to be told how to behave. (*).

The oriental culture and way of life are traditional, the modern antitraditional; the one values stability, the other change or "progress"; one demands from art an adequate expression of truth, the other self-expression; for the one, art is a necessity without which nothing can be well or truly made or adapted to good use; while for the other, art is a luxury to be enjoyed apart from activity and without bearing on conduct. The oriental dance, for example, is an intellectual discipline and physical display or, like other modern arts, the self-expression of the artist's private emotional storms. The oriental artist, even at a court, is really maintained by the unanimous patronage of a unanimous society; the modern artist depends on the precarious support of a clique that is only a tiny fraction of the whole community. As art dealt with the themes which are and have been familiar to everyone, literate or illiterate, and whether rich or poor, for millennia, there had been no necessity to include in cultural curricula courses on "the appreciation of art". When every professional had his disciples or apprentices, there was little need for "school of art" in our sense, but only for masters and pupils. In the East, the necessity for museums was not felt until the traditional arts had been almost destroyed by the contagion of "modern civilization"; just as when folksongs could be heard everywhere, no one "collected" them. (36).

... The problem of the "spiritual East" versus the "material West" is very easily mistaken; I have repeatedly emphasized that it is only accidentally a geographical or racial problem. The real clash is of traditional with antitraditional concepts and cultures; and that is unquestionably a clash of spiritual or ideological with material or sensate points of views. Shall we or shall we not delimit sacred and profane departments of life? I, at any rate, will not. I think if you consider Pallis' *Peaks and Lamas* you will see what I mean. I think it undeniable that the *modern* world (which happens to be still a Western world, however fast the East is being Westernised) is one of "impoverished reality" one *entleert* (empty) of meaning, or values. Our contemporary trust in *Progress* is a veritable *fideism* as naive as is to be found in any past historical context. (63).

For there are many of these Hindus and Buddhists whose knowledge of Christianity and of the greatest Christian writers is virtually nil, as there are Christians, equally learned whose real knowledge of any other religion but their own is virtually nil, because they have never imagined what it might be to live these other faiths. Just as there can be no real knowledge of a language if we have never even imaginatively participated in the activities to which the language refers so there can be no real knowledge of any "life" that one has not in some measure lived. (40).

The world may be likened to a vast, as yet unordered garden, having diverse soils and aspects, some watered, some arid, some plain, some mountain; the different parts of which should properly be tended by different gardeners, having experience of diverse qualities of soil and aspect; but certain ones have seized upon the plots of others, and attempted to replace the plants natural to those plots, with others more acceptable or profitable to themselves. We have not to consider only the displaced gardeners, who naturally do not admire and are not grateful for the changes introduced into their plots; but to ask whether these proceedings are beneficial to the owner of the garden for whom the gardeners work. Who is this owner but the Folk of the World of the future, which is ever becoming the present? Shall they be glad or sorry if uniformity has replaced diversity, if but one type of vegetation is to be found within their garden, flourishing perhaps in one part, but sickly in another; what of the flowers that might have flourished in that other part had they not been swept away. (5).

It is for us to show that great and lovely cities can be built again, and things of beauty made in them, without the pollution of the air by smoke or the poisoning of the river by chemicals, for us to show that man can be master, not the slave, of the mechanism he himself has created. It is for us to proclaim that wisdom is greater than knowledge; for us to make clear anew that art is something more than manual dexterity, or the mere imitation of natural forms . . . It is for us to investigate the physical science and to show that science and faith may be reconciled on a higher plane than any reached as yet. It is for

us to intellectualize and spiritualize the religious conceptions of the West, and to show that the true meaning of religious tolerance is not the refraining from persecution, but the real belief that different religions need not be mutually exclusive, the conviction that they are all good roads, suited to the varying capacities of those that tread them and leading to one end. (*).

Culture is consciousness; primarily, an unprejudiced comprehension of one's own civilisation. This is only possible when we have some idea of its relation to other cultures — likeness and differences. A capacity for making subtle distinctions must be cultivated, actually current ideas about the Orient are still excessively crude, that is, either romantic, or intolerant; this is a provincial rather than a cultured condition. To make fine distinctions the student must adopt an entirely disinterested attitude, laying aside notions of "this is higher" or "best"; education and *a priori* judgement are incompatible. Personal preferences should be reserved for personal use; only unprejudiced consideration is permissible to the student as such, or to a citizen of the world. (44).

In Asia all roads lead to India (*).

In Asia India has played the part of Greece in Europe, and we know to what extent we are still here indebted to Greece, however unconsciously. The influence of the Indian technique can be traced throughout Asia, and far down into the South Seas. At the same time each of the other great cultures of Asia preserves its own independence and unmistakably local color. (15).

I must also refer to a movement to which I give in my own mind of "The Discovery of Asia" . . . The Discovery of Asia, then, has become to Europe no longer a piratical expedition, but a spiritual adventure. (4).

But it is not only in Philosophy and Religion — Truth and Love — but also in Art that Europe and Asia are united: and from this triple likeness we may infer that all men are alike in their divinity. (*).

THERE was a time when Europe and Asia could and did actually understand each other very well. Asia has remained herself; but subsequent to the extroversion of the European consciousness and its pre-occupation with surfaces, it has become more and more difficult for European minds to think in terms of unity, and therefore more difficult to understand the Asiatic point of view. It is just possible that the mathematical development of modern science, and certain corresponding tendencies in modern European art on the one hand, and the penetration of Asiatic thought and art into the Western environment on the other, may represent the possibility of a renewed *rapprochement*. The peace and happiness of the world depend on this possibility. (30).

The beauty and logic of (Asiatic) Indian life belongs to a dying past, and the Nineteenth Century has degraded much and created nothing. If any blame for this is to be laid on alien shoulders, it should be only in the sense that if it must be that offences come, woe unto them through whom they come. It is an ungrateful and unromantic task to govern a subject race. England could not in any case have inspired a new life: the best she could have done would have been to understand and conserve through patronage and education the surviving categories of Indian civilization — architecture, music, handicrafts, popular and classic literature, and schools of philosophy — and that she failed here is to have been found wanting in imagination and sympathy. It should not have been regarded as the highest ideal of Empire "to give to all men an English mind." (3)

Just as we desire peace but not the things that make for peace, so we desire art but not the things that make for art. (24).

Possessions are a necessity to the extent that we can use them: it is altogether legitimate to enjoy what we do use, but equally inordinate

to enjoy what we cannot use or to use what cannot be enjoyed. All possessions not at the same time beautiful and useful are an affront to human dignity. Ours is perhaps the first society to find it natural that some things should be beautiful and others useful. To be voluntarily poor is to have rejected what we cannot both admire and use: this definition can be applied alike to the case of the millionaire and to that of the monk. (*).

... the contentment of innumerable peoples can be destroyed in a generation by the withering touch of our civilisation; the local market is flooded by a production in quantity with which the responsible maker by art cannot compete; the vocational structure of society, with all its guild organisation and standards of workmanship, is undermined; the artist is robbed of his art and forced to find himself a "job"; until finally the ancient society is industrialised and reduced to the level of such societies as ours, in which business takes precedence of life. Can one wonder that Western nations are feared and hated by other peoples, not alone for obvious political or economic reasons, but even more profoundly and instinctively for spiritual reasons? (58).

INDIA AND CEYLON

The extant remains of Sinhalese art fall broadly into three groups, a classical period (before the eighth century), a mediaeval period (ninth to fourteenth century) and a late mediaeval period (fifteenth century to 1815). (2).

The Sinhalese people are not, in my opinion, happier or better than they were in the eighteenth century. Talk of progress, and the reality, are not the same. Civilisation is supposed to advance by the creation of new desires, to gratify which the individual must endeavour to improve his position. But in reality it is not quantity, but quality of wants that may be taken as evidence of progress in the Art of Living.

No one acquainted with modern Sinhalese taste will pretend that it gives evidence of any improvement in the quality of wants. Indeed, it is sufficiently obvious that quantity, variety, and novelty are not really compatible with quality. (7).

The more I know of Ceylon, the more inseparable from India does it appear, and indeed I regret sometimes that Ceylon and India are not at present under one administration. Ceylon is in the truest sense a part of India. (*).

Of the unity of the Indian peoples, Ceylon is economically, mentally and spiritually, a part; and with the culture and life of India, must Ceylon's own survive. (7).

Ceylon, from the standpoint of ethnology and culture, is an integral part of India. (6).

Take for example, Ceylon (whose people are now the most denationalised of any in India), can we think of India as being complete without Ceylon? Ceylon is unique as the home of Pali literature and Southern Buddhism and in its possession of a continuous chronicle invaluable as a check upon the more uncertain data of Indian Chronology. Sinhalese Art, the Sinhalese religion and structure of Sinhalese society bring most vividly before us certain aspects of Hindu culture which it would be hard to find so perfectly reflected in any other part of modern India. The noblest of India epics, the love story of Rama and Sita, unites Ceylon and India in the mind of every Indian nor is this more so in the south than in the north. In latter times the histories of Northern India and Ceylon were linked on Vijaya's emigration, then by Asoka's missions (contemporaneous with the earliest ripples of the wake of Hindu influence which passed beyond the Himalayas to impress its ideals on the Mongolian east); and later still a Sinhalese princess became a Rajput bride to earn the perpetual love of her adopted people by her fiery death, the death of which every Rajput woman would have preferred to dishonour. (5).

India without Ceylon is incomplete, Ceylon is unique as the home of Pali literature and Southern Buddhism and as possessing a continuous chronicle invaluable as a check upon the uncertain data of Indian history. Ceylon is a more perfect window through which to gaze on India's past than can be found in India itself. Not only are its art and literature and religion free from Mohammedan influence, but they are merely influenced and not completely dominated by later Hindu conceptions, and actually preserve and reflect something of Hindu and Buddhist culture as it existed in that period of mental activity when Asoka just grasped the idea of India unity and of fraternity amongst its borders. For very many centuries the relations between South India and Ceylon resembled those between England and France in the early middle ages alternate warfare and close alliance. The nobler of the two great Indian epics unites India with Ceylon in the mind of every Indian, and Sita is known from the remotest north of India to the extreme south and there in Ceylon her name is given to many places where she is thought to have rested in her exile. In later times the histories of Northern India and Ceylon were linked by Vijaya's emigration and then by Asoka's missions and later still Padmavati became a Rajput bride and perished by fire like many another Rajput lady when death or dishonour was the only choice; and to this day her name is on the lips of the peoples of Northern India as the very flower and crown of all beauty, even as Deirdre's is in Ireland still (1).

Not only, then, is Ceylon bound to India by every mental and spiritual tie but there is no part of herself which India can so ill afford to lose. Surely it is our duty to identify ourselves with the mental and spiritual development of the motherland in the future too. (1).

There is scarcely any part of Sinhalese life, or religion or art, which is quite comprehensible without reference to India; the Sinhalese themselves are Indians; the greatness of their civilisation dates from the wave of Indian influences that reached Ceylon through Asoka's missionaries; the air and soil in which the nation has grown and borne good fruit are Indian. (7).

Early Buddhism was carried to Ceylon in the time of Asoka (3rd century B.C.) and has remained to this day the religion of the Sinhalese. During the first six centuries A.D. it was taken, in the Brahmanised Mahayana form, to China where a great Buddhist art developed on Indian lines; in the 8th century it went with Indian colonists to Java, where are to be seen some of the finest works of Buddhist art in existence. Somewhat later, Buddhist and Hindu art and thought were equally firmly established in Burma, Siam and Cambodia. (6).

The chief landmarks of the history of Ceylon are the conversion to Buddhism by Asoka's missionaries, the capital at Anuradhapura up to the 8th century; at Polonnaruwa from the 8th to the 13th century; at Kandy from the 16th century; and the British occupation in 1815. It should be noted that the distinctively Sinhalese (Buddhist) art is the Kandyan art of the interior, the art of Jaffna belongs to that of Southern India while that of the low country during the last three centuries has been one-third European. (6).

What was the secret of the past glories of the Sinhalese and Tamil civilization in Ceylon? The secret of the overflowing life in Ceylon was that originally it was part of India; that was the key to the whole of their civilisation. India was the teacher of the whole East. They could not fulfil their duty by mere references to the glories of the past or by assimilating the features of Western life. They would not even gain the respect of the West by doing that. (1).

As regards India, it has been said that "East is East and West is West, and never the twain shall meet." This is a counsel of despair, that can only have been born of the most profound disillusion and deepest conviction of impotence. I say on the contrary that human nature is an unchanging and everlasting principle; and that whoever possesses such a nature — and not merely the outward form the habits of the human animal — is endowed with the power of understanding all that belongs to that nature, without respect of time or place. (8).

This brings us to the last part of this address, viz., the consideration of practical steps that may be taken to bring us into closer touch with India. There is, first, the study of Indian history and literature essential, in any case, to the right appreciation of our own. Equal in importance to this education of the historical sense in us, is the need for the education of the geographical sense. In former times this was to some extent accomplished by means of religious pilgrimages. These are less often undertaken now and the easier means of conveyance available lessen the educational value also. Nevertheless, travelling in India is the very best method of putting oneself in touch with modern Indians. In the course of a tour in India recently, I have everywhere found a welcome for one from distant parts and have been much struck by the great strengthening of the feeling of brotherhood and unity in India and strengthening of the Indian idea generally, which may result from more extended acquaintances amongst Indians from distant parts. Misapprehensions are removed and friendships made. On this account and on account of the educational value of such travel, no Indian or Ceylonese should deem his Indian education complete, if he has not, very much in the pilgrim spirit, visited some of the historic sites of India, and made the acquaintances of other Indian peoples. Such travel would be of far more value for instance, than a hasty visit to Europe. (1).

The Ceylonese suffer terribly in their attempts to live in the European way; the minor clerk earning fifteen or twenty rupees a month endeavours to dress and feed his family in European style, and it is small wonder if debt and ruin are the ultimate result. (13).

The Ceylonese are painfully given to the imitation of European manners and customs, and those of eating meat and the use of intoxicating drinks have spread far and wide among them. Beside those Buddhists who, while remaining Buddhists, have taken to a meat diet, we have also to consider the Christians. Very few missionaries are themselves vegetarians, or encourage vegetarianism amongst their flock and their converts, and but few native Christians remain vegetarians . . . It is no wonder that many Hindus believe that in order to become a true Christian it is necessary to drink intoxicants and eat flesh food. (13).

Ahimsa or harmlessness has been always an ideal of Indian culture. From long ago the slaughter of animals was regarded as wrong, an act unnecessary, selfish, and sooner or later bringing evil upon the slayer. (13).

The spread of meat-eating, then, amongst Ceylonese, is regrettable on ethical, economic, aesthetic, and hygienic grounds, and it would be vastly to their advantage if they could be persuaded to retain their older abstemious diet and simpler life. The strange thing is that it seems to be impossible for Indians and Ceylonese to change or "progress" without throwing over everything of the past, also good and bad together, and taking on the outer life of a European in its place, also good and bad together. If they could keep the many excellent features of their own culture and civilisation, and profit only by adopting a few new ideas from the culture and civilisation of others, they might make real progress instead of progressing, as so often happens, backwards. (13).

EDUCATION

One of the most remarkable features of British rule in India has been the fact that the greatest injuries done to the people of India have taken the outward form of blessings. Of this, Education is a striking example; for no more crushing blows have ever been struck at the roots of Indian evolution than those which have been struck, often with other, and the best intentions, in the name of Education. It is sometimes said by friends of India that the National movement is the natural result of English education, and one of which England should in truth be proud, as showing that, under 'civilisation' and the Pax Britannica, Indians are becoming, at last, capable of self-government. The facts are otherwise. If Indians are still capable of self-government, it is in spite of all the anti-national tendencies of a system of education that has ignored or despised almost every ideal informing the national culture. (5).

I am staying in a house in Main Street, a new house with Mangalore tiles. Well, gentlemen, I am often tempted to use an umbrella in the house, so great is the heat that penetrates these tiles. But I have been

into some of our old Tamil houses dating from about 100 years ago: immediately on leaving the high road and entering the door, a feeling of coolness is experienced. Beside that, the houses were well and handsomely built with solid timbers, simply carved, and they are fit to stand a hundred years again, but the new house is already showing signs of wear and tear. The difference in coolness is, of course, easily explained; with only one layer of tiles, the sun's heat is transmitted to the air of the room beneath; with four or five of the old tiles, or with a palmyrah thatch, there are layers of air — a non-conductor — which prevent the transmission of heat to the room beneath. Gentlemen, here is a case in which we have not done well in following the dictates of a mere fashion and in exchanging old for new. (14).

A single generation of English education suffices to break the threads of tradition and to create a nondescript and superficial being deprived of all roots — a sort of intellectual pariah who does not belong to the East or the West, the past or the future (3).

It will be for us to develop the Indian intelligence through the medium of Indian culture, and building thereupon, to make it possible for India to resume her place amongst the nations, not merely as a competitor in material production, but as a teacher of all that belongs to a true civilisation, a leader of the future, as of the past. Herein the ordinary English educator can help but little, and can *hinder* much. (5).

It is a marvel to me how a self-respecting people can endure for a day, not the system of government — but the system of education from which we suffer. (4).

None can be true educators of the Indian people who cannot inherit their traditions, or cannot easily work in a spirit of perfect reverence for those traditions. Others can be, not educators, but merely teachers of particular subjects. As such there is still room in India for English teachers; but they should be, not in power, but subordinate; they should be engaged by, paid by, and responsible to Indian managers, as, in Japan, English teachers are responsible to Japanese authorities. (5).

By their fruits ye shall know them. The most crushing indictment of this Education is the fact that it destroys, in the great majority of those upon whom it is inflicted, all capacity for the appreciation of Indian culture. Speak to the ordinary graduate of an Indian University, or a student from Ceylon, of the ideals of the Mahabharata — he will hasten to display his knowledge of Shakespeare; talk to him of religious philosophy — you find that he is an atheist of the crude type common in Europe a generation ago, and that not only has he no religion but he is as lacking in philosophy as the average Englishman; talk to him of Indian music — he will produce a gramophone or a harmonium, and inflict upon you one or both; talk to him of Indian dress or jewellery — he will tell you that they are uncivilised and barbaric; talk to him of Indian art — it is news to him that such a thing exists; ask him to translate for you a letter written in his own mother tongue — he does not know it.* He is indeed a stranger in his own land. (5).

Yes, English educators of India, you do well to scorn the Babu graduate; he is your own special production, made in your own image; he might be one of your very selves. Do you not recognize the likeness? Probably you do not; for you are still hidebound in that impervious skin of self-satisfaction that enabled your most pompous and self-important philistine, Lord Macaulay, to believe that a single shelf of a good European library was worth all the literature of India, Arabia, and Persia. Beware lest in a hundred years the judgment be reversed, in the sense that Oriental culture will occupy a place even in European estimation, ranking at least equally with Classic. Meanwhile you have done well nigh all that could be done to eradicate it in the land of its birth. (5).

*I describe the extreme product of English education, as seen for example, in Ceylon. Not all of these statements apply equally to every part of India. The remarks on dress and music are of universal application.

Firstly, the almost universal philosophical attitude, contrasting strongly with that of the ordinary Englishman, who hates philosophy. For every science school in India today, let us see to it that there are ten tomorrow. But there are wrong as well as right ways of teaching science. A 'superstition of facts' taught in the name of science were a poor exchange for a metaphysic, for a conviction of the subjectivity of all phenomena. In India, even the peasant will grant you that "All this is maya;" he may not understand the full significance of what he says; but consider the deepening of European culture needed before the peasant there could say, however blindly, that "The world is but appearance, and by no means Thing-in-Itself."

Secondly, the sacredness of all things — the antithesis of the European division of life into sacred and profane. The tendency in European religious development has been to exclude from the domain of religion every aspect of 'worldly' activity. Science, art, sex, agriculture, commerce are regarded in the West as secular aspects of life, quite apart from religion. It is not surprising that under such conditions, those concerned with life in its reality, have come to feel the so-called religion that ignores the activities of life, as a thing apart, and of little interest or worth. In India, this was never so; religion idealises and spiritualizes life itself, rather than excludes it. This intimate entwining of the transcendental and material, this annihilation of the possibility of profanity or vulgarity of thought, explains the strength and permanence of Indian faith, and demonstrates not merely the stupidity, but the wrongness of attempting to replace a religious culture by one entirely material.

Thirdly, the true spirit of religious toleration, illustrated continually in Indian history, and based upon a consciousness of the fact that all religious dogmas are formulas imposed, upon the infinite by the limitations of the finite human intellect.

Fourthly, etiquette — civilisation conceived of as the product of civil men. There is a Sinhalese proverb that runs, "Take the ploughman from the plough, and wash off his dirt, and he is fit to rule a

kingdom." "This was spoken", says Knox, "of the people of Cande Uda (the highlands of Ceylon) because of the civility, understanding, and gravity of the poorest men among them. Their ordinary Plowmen and Husbandmen do speak elegantly, and are full of compliment. And there is no difference between the ability of speech of a Country man and a Courtier". There could be said of few people any greater things than these; but they cannot be said of those who have passed through the "instruction machines" of today; they belong to a society where life itself brought culture, not books alone.

Fifthly, special ideas in relation to education, such as the relation between teacher and pupil, implied in the words of *guru* and *chela* (master and disciple); memorizing great literature, the epics as embodying ideals of character; learning a privilege demanding qualifications, not to be forced on the unwilling or used as a mere road to material prosperity; extreme importance of the teacher's personality.

"**A**s the man who digs with a spade obtains water, even so an obedient (pupil) obtains the knowledge which lies in his teacher." (Manu II. 218). This view is antithetic to the modern practice of making everything easy for the pupil.

Sixthly, the basis of ethics are not any commandments, but the principle of altruism, founded on the philosophical truth: "Thy neighbour is thyself." Recognition of the unity of all life.

Seventhly, control, not merely of action, but of thoughts; concentration, one-pointedness, capacity for stillness.

These are some of the points of view which are intrinsic in Indian culture, and must be recognized in any sound educational ideal for India; but are in the present system ignored or opposed. The aim should be to develop the people's intelligence through the medium of their own national culture. For the national culture is the only *Aussichtspunkt* from which, in relation to a wider landscape, a man can rightly *sich am Denken orientiren*. To this culture has to be added, for those brought

into contact with the modern idea, some part of that wider synthesis that should enable such an one to understand what may be the nature of the prospect seen from some other of the great headlands, the other national cultures, wherefrom humanity has gazed into the dim sea of the Infinite Unknown. To effect this wider synthesis, are needed signals and interpretations, rather than that laborious backward march through the emptiness of a spiritual desert where one may perish by the way, or if not so, then weary and footsore arrive at last upon one of those other headlands, only to learn, it may be, that there is to be found a less extensive prospect and a more barren soil. (5).

Our university must above all be a school of Oriental learning sufficient not only for ourselves, but to attract scholars from all parts of the world to learn the wisdom of the East in the East. (4).

More necessary, therefore, than all the labours of politicians, is National Education. (*)

Wherever you go, it must be not as masters or superiors but as guests (40).

The missionary must not be allowed to 'educate', until he really understands the Indian people and desires to help them to solve their own problems in their own way; he must not be allowed to teach, until he himself has learnt. (64).



Alas for wasted opportunity! To share in the true education of the Indian woman were indeed a privilege. Behind her are the traditions of the great women of Indian history and myth, women strong in love and war, sainthood, in submission and in learning. She is still a guarded flame, this daughter of a hundred earls. She has not to struggle for a living in a competitive society, but is free to be herself. Upon her might be lavished the resources of all culture, to make yet more perfect that which is already most exquisitely so. You that have entered on the task so confidently, with the ulterior motive of conversion, have proved yourselves unfit. Lay no blame on India for her slowness to accept the education you have offered to her women; praise her rather for the wise instinct that leads her to mistrust you. When you learn that none can truly educate those against whose ideals they are blindly prejudiced; when you realise that you can but offer new modes of expression to faculties already exercised in other ways; when you come with reverence, as well to learn as to teach; when you establish schools within the Indian social ideal, and not antagonistic to it — then, perhaps, we may ask you to help us build upon that great foundation. Not I trust, before; lest there should be too much for the daughters of our daughters to unlearn. (*)



A nationalism which does not recognize the rights and duties of others but attempts to aggrandize itself at their expense, becomes no longer nationalism but a disease generally called Imperialism.

From Coomaraswamy's speech on "India and Ceylon" to the Ceylon Social Reform Society in April 1907 Ceylon National Review, vol. II, no. 4, 1907.

INDIA

What after all, is the secret of Indian greatness? Not a dogma or a book; but the great open secret that all knowledge and all truth are absolute and infinite, waiting not to be created, but to be found; the secret of the infinite superiority of intuition, the method of direct perception, over the intellect, regarded as a mere organ of discrimination. There is about us a storehouse of the As-Yet-Unknown, infinite and exhaustible; but to this wisdom, the way of access is not through intellectual activity. The intuition that reaches to it, we call Imagination and Genius. It came to Sir Isaac Newton when he saw the apple fall, and there flashed across his brain the Law of Gravity. It came to the Buddha as he sat through the silent night in meditation, and hour by hour all things became apparent to him; he knew the exact circumstances of all beings that have ever been in the endless and infinite worlds; at the twentieth hour he received the divine infinite sakvalas as clearly as if they were close at hand; then came still deeper insight, and he perceived the cause of sorrow and the path of knowledge, 'He reached at last the exhaustless source of truth.' The same is true of all 'revelation'; the Veda (sruti), the eternal Logos, 'breathed forth by Brahma,' in whom it survives the destruction and creation of the Universe, is 'seen,' or 'heard,' not made, by its human authors.....The reality of such perception is witnessed to by every man within himself upon rare occasions and on an infinitely smaller scale. It is the inspiration of the poet. It is at once the vision of the artist, and the imagination of the natural philosopher. (5).

All that India or any people can offer to the world proceeds from her philosophy. Of course, every race must solve its own problems, and those of its own day. I do not suggest that the ancient Indian solution of the special Indian problems, though its lessons may be many and valuable, can be directly applied to modern conditions. The Brahmanical idea is an Indian 'City of the gods,' — as *devanagari*, the name of the Sanskrit script, suggests. The building of that city anew is the constant task of civilization; and though the details of our plan may change, and the contour of our building, we may learn from India to build on the foundations of the religion of Eternity.

Where the Indian mind differs most from the average mind of Modern Europe is in its views of the value of philosophy. In Europe and America the study of philosophy is regarded as an end in itself, and as such it seems of but little importance to the ordinary man. In India, on the contrary, philosophy is not regarded primarily as a mental gymnastic, but rather with deep religious conviction, as our salvation (*moksha*) from the ignorance (*avidya*) which forever hides from our eyes the vision of reality. Philosophy is the key to the map of life, by which are set forth the meaning of life and the means of attaining its goal. It is no wonder, then, that the Indians have pursued the study of philosophy with enthusiasm, for these are matters which concern all. (3)

You see, this loss of beauty in our lives is a proof that we do not love India; for India, above all nations, was beautiful not long ago. It is the weakness of our national movement that we do not love India; we love suburban England, we love the comfortable bourgeois prosperity that is to be some day established when we have learned enough science and forgotten enough art to successfully compete with Europe in a commercial war conducted on its present lines. It is not thus that nations are made. (*)

I am often reminded of the Cairene girl's lute, in the tale of Miriam and Ali Nur-al-Din. It was kept in a "green satin bag with slings of gold." She took the bag "and opening it, shook it, whereupon there fell thereout two-and-thirty pieces of wood, which she fitted one into other, male into female and female into male; till they became a polished lute of Indian workmanship. Then she uncovered her wrists and laying the lute in her lap, bent over it with the bending of mother over babe, and swept the strings with her finger-tips; whereupon it moaned and resounded and after its olden home yearned; and it remembered the waters that gave it drink and the earth whence it sprang and wherein it grew and it minded the carpenters who cut it and

the polishers who polished it and the merchants who made it their merchandise and the ships that shipped it; and it cried and called aloud and moaned and groaned; and it was as if she asked it of all these things and it answered her with the tongue of the case." Just such an instrument is India, composed of many parts seemingly irreconcilable, but in reality each one cunningly designed towards a common end; so, too, when these parts are set together and attuned, will India tell of the earth from which she sprang, the waters that gave her drink, and the Shapers that have shaped her being; nor will she be then the idle singer of an empty day, but the giver of hope to all, when hope will most avail, and most be needed. (5)

No one can say that any such idea as that of a Federated States of India is altogether foreign to the Indian mind. But more than all this, there is evidence enough that the founders of Indian culture and civilization and religion (whether you call them Rishis or men) had this unity in view; and the manner in which this idea pervades the whole of Indian culture is the explanation of the possibility of its rapid realisation now. Is it for nothing that India's sacred shrines are many and far apart; that one who would visit more than one or two of these must pass over hundreds of miles of Indian soil? Benares is the sacred city of Buddhist, and Hindu alike; Samanala in Ceylon is a holy place for Buddhist, Hindu and Muhammedan. Is there no meaning in the sacred reverence for the Himalayas which every Indian feels? Is the *geis* altogether meaningless which forbids the orthodox Hindu to leave the Motherland and cross the seas? Is the passionate adoration of the Indian people for the Ganges thrown away? How much is involved in such phrases as 'The Seven Great Rivers' (of India)! The Hindu in the north repeats the mantram:

*Om gange cha yamune chaiva godavari, sarasvati,
Narmade, sindhu kaveri jale' smin sannidhim kuru. **

when performing ceremonial ablutions; the Buddhist in Ceylon uses the same prayer on a similar occasion. Or take the epics, the foundation of Indian education and culture; or a poem like the Megha Duta, the

* "Hail; O ye Ganges, Jamna, Godavari, Sarasvati, Narmada, Sindhu and Kaveri, come and approach these waters."

best known and most read work of Kalidasa. Are not these expressive of love for and knowledge of the Motherland? The 'holy land' of the Indian is not a far-off Palestine but the Indian land itself. (5)

The whole of Indian culture is so pervaded with this idea of India as THE LAND, that it has never been necessary to insist upon it overmuch, for no one could have supposed it otherwise. (55)

Let us not forget that in setting this, ideal of Nationalism before us, we are not merely striving for a right but accepting a duty that is binding on us, that of self-realisation to the utmost for the sake of others. India's ancient contribution to the civilisation of the world does not and never can justify her children in believing that her work is done. There is work yet for her to do, which, if not done by her, will remain for ever undone. We may not shirk our part in the re-organisation of life, which is needed to make life tolerable under changed conditions. It is for us to show that industrial production can be organised on socialistic lines without converting the whole world into groups of state-owned factories. It is for us to show that great and lovely cities can be built again, and things of beauty made in them, without the pollution of the air by smoke or the poisoning of the river by chemicals; for us to show that man can be the master; not the slave of the mechanism he himself has created.

It is for us to proclaim that wisdom is greater than knowledge; for us to make clear anew that art is something more than manual dexterity, or the mere imitation of natural forms. It is for us to investigate the physical and supersensual faculties anew in the light of the discoveries of Physical Science and to show that Science and Faith may be reconciled on a higher plane than any reached as yet. It is for us to intellectualise and spiritualise the religious conceptions of the West, and to show that the true meaning of religious tolerance is not the refraining from persecution, but the real belief that different religions need not be mutually exclusive, the conviction that they are all good roads, suited to the varying capacities of those that tread them, and leading to one end.

This and much more is our allotted task. Other peoples have found other work to do, some of which we may well share, and some leave to those still best fitted to perform it; but let us not turn from our own task to attempt the seemingly more brilliant or more useful work of others. "Better is one's own duty though insignificant, than even the well-executed duty of another." Let us not be tempted by all the kingdoms of the earth; granted there is much that we have not, which others have, and which we may acquire from them; what is the price to be? "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" (5)

The highest ideal of nationality is that of service. India, by the scorn which she has cast upon her own arts, by the degradation of standard in her own culture, here sufficiently evidenced by the possibility of finding pleasure in a gramophone or a harmonium, is casting aside this highest privilege of service. Nations are judged not by what they assimilate, but by what they contribute to human culture. India, by her blindness to the beauty that till yesterday was everywhere in and around her in art and music, is forfeiting this privilege of service. For no man of another nation will come to learn of India, if her teachers be gramophones and harmoniums and imitators of European realistic art. (4).

The flowering of humanity is more to us than the victory of any party. The only condition of a renewal of life in India, or elsewhere, should be spiritual, not merely an economic and political awakening, and it is on this ground alone that it will be possible to bridge the gulf which has been supposed to divide the East from the West. And so while India is occupied with national education and social reconstruction at home, she must also throw in her lot with the world: what we need for the creation of a common civilization is the recognition of common problems, and to co-operate in their solution. Meanwhile, it is not sufficient for the Western world to stand aside from the development of Asia, with idle curiosity or apprehension wondering what will happen next. There is serious danger that the degradation of Asia will ultimately menace the security of European social idealism, for the standing of

idealism is even more precarious in modern Asia than in modern Europe: and that would be a strange nemesis if European Post-Industrialists should ultimately be defeated by an Industrialism or Imperialism of European origin established in the East!.....Asia is like the artist in the modern city — doing nothing great mainly because nothing heroic is demanded of him. The future of India depends as much upon what is asked of her as upon what she is! (*).

Indian culture is valid not so much because it is Indian as because it is culture. At the same time its special forms are adapted to a specifically Indian nature and inheritance, and they are appropriate to us in the same way that a national dress is appropriate to those who have a right to wear it. We cut a sorry figure in our foreign or hybrid clothes; and only invite the ridicule of foreign musicians for imitating their vulgarisms, such as the harmonium. (35).

In almost every art and craft, as also in music, there exists in Hindustan a complete and friendly fusion of the two cultures. The non-sectarian character of the styles of Indian art has indeed always been conspicuous; so that it is often only by special details that one can distinguish Jain from Buddhist stupas, Buddhist from Hindu sculpture, or the Hindu from the Musulman minor crafts. The one great distinction of Mughal from Hindu art is not so much racial as social; the former is an art of courts and connoisseurs, owing much to individual patronage, the latter belongs as much to the folk as to the kings. (6).

We believe in India for the Indians but if we do so, it is not merely because we want our own India for ourselves, but because we believe that every nation has its own part to play in the long tale of human progress, and that nations which are not free to develop their own individuality and own character are also unable to make the contribution to the sum of human culture which the world has a right to expect of them. We are not merely striving for a right, but accepting a duty that is binding on us, that of self-realisation to the utmost for the sake of others. (5).

Have you ever thought that India politically and economically free, but subdued by Europe in her inmost soul is scarcely an ideal to be dreamt of or to live or die, for. (4)

The inspiration of our Nationalism must be not hatred or self-seeking: but love, first of India, and secondly of England and of the world. The highest ideal of nationality is service: and it is because this service is impossible for us so long as we are politically and spiritually dominated by any Western civilization, that we are bound to achieve our freedom. It is in this spirit that we must say to Englishmen, that we will achieve this freedom, if they will, with their consent and with their help: but if they will not, then without their consent and inspite of their resistance. (*).

It will never be possible for the European nationalist ideal that every nation should choose its own form of government, and lead its own life, to be realized — so long as the European nations have, or desire to have, possessions in Asia. What has to be secured is the common co-operation of East and West for common ends; not the subjugation of either to the other nor their lasting estrangement. (*)

Freedom is the opportunity to act in accordance with one's own nature. But our leaders are already denatured, quite as much as Lord Macaulay could have wished — they have yet to 'discover' India. (35).

The English-speaking peoples have, indeed labored under one great handicap, that of their domination by Rudyard Kipling, a skilled performer to the gallery, to be sure, but one whose irresponsible and un-instructured mentality represented all that an Englishman's ought never to have been. He, by giving free expression to his resentment of his own inability to synthesize the East and West in his own experience, has probably done more than any other one man to delay the recognition not alone of their ultimately common heritage, but even of their common humanity; more than any other Englishman to make it true for Englishmen that east of Suez "there ain't no Ten Commandments." You English-speaking peoples listened to him, nevertheless, and

gave him a place in your literary pantheon where, in fact, he held up the mirror to the adolescent imperialistic mentality and carries its and his "white man's burden" so bravely. How can we think of you as grown-up men, as long as you play only with such toys as Kipling gave you, and only babble of green fields — the playing fields of Eton? It is high time that the Hollywood picture of India was forgotten. (38).

INDIAN WOMEN

It would have been contrary to the spirit of Indian culture to deny to individual women the opportunity of saintship or learning in the sense of closing to them the schools of divinity or science after the fashion of the Western academies in the nineteenth century. But where the social norm is found in marriage and parenthood for men and women alike, it could only have been in exceptional cases and under exceptional circumstances that the latter specialised, whether in divinity, like Auvvai, Mira Bai, or the Buddhist nuns, in science, like Lilavati, or in war, like Chand Bibi or the Rani of Jhansi. Those set free to cultivate expert knowledge of science or to follow with undivided allegiance either religion or any art, could only be *sannyasini* or devotee, the widow, and the courtesan. A majority of women have always, and naturally, preferred marriage and motherhood to either of these conditions. But those who felt the call of religion, those from whom a husband's death removed the central motif of their life, and those trained from childhood as expert artists, have always maintained a great tradition in various branches of cultural activity, such as social service or music. What we have to observe is that Hindu sociologists have always regarded these specializations as more or less incompatible with wifehood and motherhood; life is not long enough for the achievement of many different things. (3).

Indian women, at the present day and in so far as they have not yet been 'brought up to date' are our best conservators of Indian culture. We may not forget that in a country like India, any judgement of literacy would be absurd, literacy, in the modern world of magazines, newspapers and the radio is no guarantee of culture whatever; and it is far better not to know how to read than not to know what to read! (35)

Western critics have often asserted that the Oriental woman is a slave, and that we have made her what she is. We can only reply that we do not identify freedom with self-assertion, and that the Oriental woman is what she is, only because our social and religious culture has permitted her to be and to remain essentially feminine.

Exquisite as she may be in literature and art we dare not claim for ourselves as men the whole honour of creating such a type, however persistently the industrious industrial critic would thrust upon us.

The Eastern woman is not, at least we do not claim that she is, superior to other women in her innermost nature; she is perhaps an older, purer and more specialised type, but certainly an universal type, and it is precisely here that the industrial woman departs from type. Nobility in a woman does not depend upon race, but upon ideals; it is the outcome of a certain view of life.

Savitri, Padmavati, Sita, Radha, Uma, Lilavati, Tara — our divine and human heroines — have an universal fellowship, for everything feminine is of the Mother. Who could have been more wholly devoted than Alcetis, more patient than Griselda, more loving than Deirdre, more a soldier than Joan of Arc, more Amazon than Brynhild? (3).

Even in recent times, in families where the men have received an English education unrelated to Indian life and thought, the inheritance of Indian modes of thought and feeling rests in the main with women; for a definite philosophy of life is bound up with household ritual and traditional etiquette and finds expression equally in folk-tale and cradle song and popular poetry, and in those puranic and epic songs which constitute the household Bible literature of India. Under these conditions it is often the case that Indian women, with all their faults of sentimentality and ignorance, have remained the guardians of a spiritual culture which is of greater worth than the efficiency and information of the educated. (3).

No story is more appropriate than that of Madalasa and her son Vikranta to illustrate the position of the Indian mother as teacher. As Vikranta grew up day by day, the Markandeya Purana relates, Madalasa 'taught him knowledge of the Self by ministering to him in sickness; and as he grew in strength and there waxed in him his father's heart, he attained to knowledge of the Self by his mother's words.' And these were Madalasa's words, spoken to the baby crying on her lap: "My child, thou art without a name or form, and it is but in fantasy that thou hast been given a name. This thy body, framed of the five elements, is not thine in sooth, nor art thou of it. Why does thou weep? Or, maybe, thou weapest not; it is a sound self-born that cometh forth from the king's son... In the body dwells another self, and therewith abideth not the thought that 'This is mine', which appertaineth to the flesh. Shame that man is so deceived!" (3).

It is not, indeed, by contrasting the religious stand-points of the East, and the West that the supposed inferior position of woman in the East can be demonstrated. At the present day there are millions of Orientals who worship the Divine life in the image of a woman. Woman is honoured in religious literature and art.

Mahadev, addressing Uma, in the Mahabharata says, 'Thou O Lady, knowest both the Self and the Not-Self..... Thou art skilled in every work. Thou art endured with self-restraint and with perfect same-sightedness in respect of every creature. Thy energy and power are equal to My own, and Thou hast not shrunk from the most severe austerities'.

Again, the Ramayana, when Rama leaves his kingdom to live as a hermit in the forest Vasishtha, pleading that Sita should not follow him, suggests that she should reign in his stead: "Sita will occupy Rama's seat. Of all these that marry, the wife is the soul. Sita will govern the earth, as she is Rama's self". Sita, however, chooses to follow Rama.

In the great law book of Manu we find "Where women are honoured, there the gods are pleased; but where they are not honoured

no sacred rite yields rewards". There is too, the Indian saying: "Thou shall not strike a woman even with a flower".

In Sufi mysticism, the Beloved (feminine) is "all that lives" — God: the Lover (masculine), is a dead thing" — the individual so lacking the Divine Life. These lines were written by Jalaluddin Rumi:

Woman is a ray of God, not a mere mistress.

The Creator's Self, as it were, not a mere creature! (46).

I would admit women to absolute equality of opportunity with men in all respects. But I think that State most fortunate wherein most women between the ages of twenty and forty and primarily concerned with the making of children, beautiful in every sense. To this end women must obtain economic security, either from individuals or from the State. There can be no freedom for women which does not include the freedom to have, as well as not to have children. It is ultimately I conceive — at least, I hope — for the right to be themselves, rather than for the right to become more like men, that Suffragettes are, however unconsciously, fighting. There can be no freedom for women till good motherhood is regarded as an intrinsic glory. (46).

The East has always recognised the fundamental difference in the psychology of men and women. I do not think that any attempt to minimise or to ignore differences can be successful. It is because men and women are different that they need each other. What is needed at present is that women should be allowed to discover for themselves what is their "sphere", rather than that they should continue to occupy perforce the sphere which men (rightly or wrongly) have at various times allowed to them in the patriarchal ages. This necessity is as much a necessity for the West as for the East.

Social status, as I have said, needs reformation both in the East and in the West. But the West far more than the East needs a change

of heart. The Western view of sex is degraded and materially contrasted with the Eastern. Women are not lightly spoken of, or written of, in the East as they are so often in the West. Sex for the Oriental is a sacrament. For the European it is a pleasure.

With the consciousness of this, and much more that might be added to it, I feel that the West has at least as much to learn from the East of reverence to women as the East has to learn from the West. And it is better for reformers, whether in the East or West, to work together for a common end than to pride themselves upon their own supposedly superior achievement. (46).

Hinduism justifies no cult of ego-expression, but aims consistently at spiritual freedom. Those who are conscious of a sufficient inner life become the more indifferent to outward expression of their own or any changing personality. The ultimate purpose of Hindu social discipline are that men should unify their individuality with a wider and deeper than individual life, should fulfil appointed tasks regardless of failure or success, distinguish the timeless from its shifting forms, and escape the all-too-narrow prison of the 'I and mine'. (3).

Why should women have sought for modes of self-advertisement that held no lure even for men? The governing concept of Hindu ethics is vocation (*dharma*); the highest merit consists in the fulfilment of 'one's own duty', in other words, in dedication to one's calling. Hindu society was highly organized; and where it was considered wrong for a man to fulfil the duties of another man rather than his own, how much more must a confusion of function as between woman and man have seemed wrong, where differentiation is so much more evident. In the words of Manu: 'To be mothers were women created, and to be fathers men;' and adds significantly 'therefore are religious sacraments ordained in the Veda to be observed by the husband together with the wife.' (3).

A majority of women have always and naturally preferred marriage and motherhood to either of these conditions. But those who felt

the call of religion, those from whom a husband's death removed the central motif of their life, and those trained from childhood as expert artists, have always maintained a great tradition in various branches of cultural activity, such as social service or music. (3).

What we would have to observe is that Hindu sociologists have always regarded these specializations as more or less incompatible with wifehood and motherhood; life is not long enough for the achievement of many different things. (3).

The Asiatic theory of marriage, which would have been perfectly comprehensible in the Middle Ages, before the European woman had become an economic parasite, and which is still very little removed from that of Roman or Greek Christianity, is not readily intelligible to the industrial democratic consciousness of Europe and America, which is so much more concerned for rights than for duties, and desires more than anything else to be released from responsibilities — regarding such release as freedom. (3).

It is thus that Western reformers would awaken a divine discontent in the hearts of Oriental women, forgetting that the way of egoassertion cannot be a royal road to realisation of the Self. The industrial mind is primarily sentimental, and therefore cannot reason clearly upon love and marriage; but the Asiatic analysis is philosophic, religious and practical. (3).

Current Western theory seeks to establish marriage on a basis of romantic love and free choice; marriage thus depends on the accident of 'falling in love'. Those who are 'crossed in love' or do not love are not required to marry. This individualistic position, however, is only logically defensible if at the same time it is recognized that to fall out of love must end the marriage. It is a high and religious ideal which justifies sexual relations only as the outward expression demanded by passionate love and regards an intimacy continued or begun for mere pleasure, or for reasons of prudence, or even as a duty, as essentially

immoral; it is an ideal which isolated individuals and groups have constantly upheld; and it may be that the ultimate development of idealistic individualism will tend to a nearer realization of it. (3).

But do not let us deceive ourselves that because the Western marriage is nominally founded upon free choice, it therefore secures a permanent unity of spiritual and physical passion. On the contrary, perhaps in a majority of cases, it holds together those who are no longer 'in love'; habit, considerations of prudence, or, if there are children, a sense of duty often compel the passionless continuance of a marriage for the initiation of which romantic love was felt to be a *sine qua non*. Those who now live side by side upon a basis of affection and common interest would not have entered upon marriage on this basis alone. (3).

If the home is worth preserving under modern conditions — and in India at any rate, the family is still the central element of social organization, then probably the 'best solution' will always be found in some such compromise as is implied in a more or less permanent marriage; though greater tolerance than is now usual must be accorded to exceptions above and below the norm. What are we going to regard as the constructive basis of the normal marriage? (3).

For Hindu sociologists marriage is a social and ethical relationship, and the begetting of children the payment of a debt. Romantic love is a brief experience of timeless freedom, essentially religious and ecstatic, in itself as purely anti-social as every glimpse of Union is a denial of the Relative; it is the way of Mary. It is true the glamor of this experience may persist for weeks and months, when the whole of life is illuminated by the partial merging of the consciousness of the lover and beloved; but sooner or later in almost every case there must follow a return to the world of unreality, and that insight which once endowed the beloved with innumerable perfections fades in the light of common sense. The lovers are fortunate if there remains to them a basis of common interest and common duty and a mutuality of temperament adequate for friendship, affection and forbearance; upon this chance

depends the possibility of happiness during the greater part of almost every married life. (3).

The Hindu marriage differs from the marriage of sentiment mainly in putting these considerations first. Here, as elsewhere, happiness will arise from the fulfilment of vocation, far more than when immediate satisfaction is made the primary end. I use the term vocation advisedly; for the Oriental marriage, like the Oriental actor's art, is the fulfilment of a traditional design, and does not depend upon the accidents of sensibility. To be such a man as Rama, such a wife as Sita, rather than to express 'oneself', is the aim. The formula is pre-determined; husband and wife alike have parts to play; and it is from this point of view that we can best understand the meaning of Manu's law, that a wife should look on her husband as a god, regardless of his personal merit or demerits — it would be beneath her dignity to deviate from a woman's norm merely because of the failure of a man. It is for her own sake and for the sake of the community, rather than for his alone, that life must be attuned to the eternal unity of Purusha and Prakriti. (3).

Thus in Hindu society the social order is placed before the happiness of the individual, whether man or woman. This is the explanation of the greater peace which distinguishes the arranged marriage of the East; where there is no deception there can be no disappointment. And since the conditions on which it is founded do not change, it is logical that Hindu marriage should be indissoluble; only when social duties have been fulfilled and social debts paid, is it permissible for the householder to relinquish simultaneously the duties and the rights of the social individual. It is also logical that when the marriage is childless it is permissible to take a second wife with the consent — and often at the wish — of the first. (3).

It is sometimes asked, what opportunities are open to the Oriental woman? How can she express herself? The answer is that life is so designed that she is given the opportunity to be a woman — in other words, to realize, rather than to express herself. It is possible that

modern Europe errs in the opposite direction. We must also remember that very much which passes for education nowadays is superficial; some of it amounts to little more than parlor tricks, and nothing is gained by communicating this condition to Asia, where I have heard of modern parents who desired that their daughters should be taught 'a little French' or 'a few strokes on the violin'. The arts in India are professional, vocational, demanding undivided service; nothing is taught to the amateur by way of social accomplishment or studied superficially. And woman represents the continuity of the racial life, an energy which cannot be divided or diverted without a corresponding loss of racial vitality; she can no more desire to be something other than herself, than the Vaishya could wish to be known as a Kshatriya, or the Kshatriya, as a Brahman. (3).

It has been shown in fact, some seventy-five per cent of Western graduate women do not marry; and apart from these, if it be true that five-sixths of a child's tendencies and activities are already determined before it reaches school age, and that the habits then deeply rooted cannot be greatly modified, if it be true that so much depends on deliberate training while the instincts of the child are still potential and habits unformed, can we say that women whose social duties or pleasures, or self-elected careers or unavoidable wage slavery draws them into the outer world, are fulfilling their duty to the race, or as we should say, the debt of the ancestors? (3).

The modern suffragist declares that the state has no right to demand of woman, whether directly or indirectly, by bribe or pressure of opinion, that she consider herself under any obligation, in return for the protection afforded her, to produce its future citizens. But we are hardly likely to see this point of view accepted in these days when the right of society to conscript the bodies of men is almost universally conceded. It is true that many who do not acquiesce in the existing industrial order are prepared to resist conscription in the military sense, that is to say, conscription for destruction; but we are becoming accustomed to the idea of another kind of conscription, or rather cooperation, based on service, and indeed, according to either of the

two dynamic theories of a future society — the syndicalist and the individualistic — it must appear that without the fulfilment of function there can exist no rights. From the cooperative point of view society has an absolute right to compel its members to fulfill the functions that are necessary to it; and only those who, like the anchorite, voluntarily and entirely renounce the advantages of society and the protection of law have a right to ignore the claims of society.* From the individualist point of view, on the other hand, the fulfilment of function is regarded as a spontaneous activity, as is even now true in the cases of the thinker and the artist; but even the individualist does not expect to get something for nothing and the last idea he has is to compel the service of others.

I doubt if anyone will deny that it is the function or nature of women, as a group — not necessarily in every individual case — in general, to be mothers, alike in spiritual and physical senses. What we have to do then, is not to assert the liberty of women to deny the duty or right of motherhood, however we regard it, but to accord this function a higher protection and honor than it now receives. And here, perhaps, there is still something to be learnt in Asia. There the pregnant woman is auspicious, and receives the highest respect; whereas in many industrial and secular Western societies she is an object of more or less open ridicule, she is ashamed to be seen abroad, and tries to conceal her condition, sometimes even by means that are injurious to her own and the child's health. That this was not the case in a more vital period of European civilization may be seen in all the literature and art of the Middle Ages and particularly in the status of the Virgin Mary, whose motherhood endeared her to the folk so much more than her virginity. (3).

* A vigorous society can well afford to support, and in the interests of spiritual values will gladly support, so far as support is necessary, not only thinkers and artists, whose function is obvious, but also a certain number of thorough-going rebels who to all appearances are mere idlers. But the idler, whether anchorite or courtesan, must not demand to be supported in luxury, and must recognize that whatever he or she receives is given in love, and not according to law.

To avoid misunderstanding, let me say in passing, that in depicting the life of Hindu women as fulfilling a great ideal, I do not mean to indicate the Hindu social formula as a thing to be repeated or imitated. This would be a view as futile as that of the Gothic revival in architecture; the reproduction of period furniture does not belong to life. A perfection that has been can never be a perfection for us. (3)....

ANTI-NAUTCH MOVEMENT

There is probably no social culture on which the honour of women is more jealously guarded than the Hindu: at the same time, no society is free from the problem of prostitution, and it is characteristic of Hinduism that a solution very different from the Western has been sought. This solution has in the recognition of the prostitute as a human being. There is no street solicitation in India, unless it may be in large towns where the structure of society has broken down, and modern conditions prevail. In practice, the dancing girls attached to Hindu temples in Southern India, and the professional singers and dancers generally in other parts of India, are courtesans. But they are also in the highest sense artists. They are independent, and sometimes own wealth. I do not think they are even exploited, as in the White Slave traffic of Europe. The most important point to observe, however, is that they no wise lack in self-respect, they have a position in the world, and are skilled in a refined classic art, the lyric symbolism of which is essentially religious. The 'Anti-Nautch Movement' of modern reformers, I regard as fundamentally mistaken, as it merely degrades the status of the courtesan without in any way touching the root of the problem. (53).

SAHAJA

In India we could not escape the conviction that sexual love has a deep and spiritual significance. There is nothing with which we can better compare the 'mystic union' of the finite with its infinite ambient — that one experience which proves itself and is the only ground of faith than the self-oblivion of earthly lovers locked in each other's arms,

where 'each is both'. Physical proximity, contact, and interpenetration are the expressions of love, only because love is the recognition of identity. These two are one flesh, because they have remembered their unity of spirit. This is moreover a fuller identity than the mere sympathy of two individuals, and each as individual has now no more significance for the other than the gates of heaven for one who stands within. It is like an algebraic equation where the equation is the only truth and the terms may stand for anything. The least intrusion of the ego, however involves a return to the illusion of duality. (3).

There is also a great difference between the Eastern and Western attitude towards sexual intercourse; on the one hand the ethic of Hinduism, with its ideals of renunciation, is even severer than that of Roman Catholic Christianity: on the other we have to note that Hinduism embraces and recognises and idealises the whole of life. Thus it is that sex relation can be treated frankly and simply in religious and poetic literature and art. In its highest form, the sex relation is a sacrament and even more secularly regarded, it is rather an art than a mere animal gratification. All this, and many other things, must be considered in estimating the status of the Indian Courts . . . No society, as I have remarked, has ever been free from the problem of prostitution, I think that the evil has been least evil where, as in India, the recognised standards of life are exceedingly high and where, at the same time, the courtesan is protected by her defined social or religious status and her own culture. There is no doubt that under such conditions, spiritual degradation and physical disease must have been reduced to a minimum; where, on the other hand, the courtesan is treated as an outcast, scarcely even as a human being the reverse result most follow. (53).



FOLK ARTS

Folk arts preserve symbolic material that is very ancient and of deep significance — even though this may have been partly forgotten nowadays. The folk art is not really *primitive* or naive in the anthropological sense, but preserves the *primordial* symbolism of the metaphysical tradition — mixed, of course, in some cases with more modern elements. (70).

SWADESHI

True Swadeshi is none of these things: it is a way of looking at life. It is essentially sincerity. Seek first this, learn once more the art of living, and you will find that our ancient civilization, industrial no less than spiritual will re-arise from the ashes of our vulgarity and parasitism of today. (4).

True Swadeshi would have attempted to preserve the status of our skilled artisans and village craftsmen, for the sake of the value to our country of men as Men. (4).

The imitation of European ways of living, whether in respect of dress, food, architecture or what not, has led to the adoption of many European luxuries which are quite unnecessary, and sometimes positively injurious. We shall certainly be much wiser to do without these useless or injurious things altogether — with economy to ourselves — than we should be in making them locally, even worse than they are made in Europe. There is, for example, a large class of goods, cheap and nasty, which are manufactured solely for the Eastern market, and which no one with education or taste would use in England. Yet these are purchased eagerly by Indians who desire to furnish in the European style, and in such quantities that their drawing-rooms are more like shops than living-rooms.

It is just so with other arts and industries: we neglect what lies at our doors, to buy from afar what we do not understand and cannot use

to advantage. No wonder that we are poor; aesthetic demoralisation and commercial failure will always be inseparable in the long run. Cast aside the village weaver's traditional skill, not only in technique but in design, and you destroy so much of the national culture, and the whole standard of living is ultimately lowered. Competition with Europe, on the lines of modern commercialism, must involve intellectual, and ultimately industrial ruin. It matters little whether it is the Lancashire manufacturer or the great mill-owner of Bombay who successfully contests the village weaver's market. (*).

I have sought in vain for any expression in Swadeshi writings of a primary desire to make goods more useful or more beautiful than those imported, or to preserve for the country any art, *qua* art, and not merely as an industry. (5).

SWADESHI must be something more than a political weapon. It must be a religious artistic ideal. (4).

Swadeshi must be inspired by a *broad and many-sided national sentiment, and must have definitely constructive aims; where such a sentiment exists, industrial Swadeshi will be its inevitable outcome without effort and without failure.* (5).

Not infrequently the Swadeshi cry is an exhortation to self-sacrifice. It seems to me that this is an entirely false position. It is never worth while in the long run putting up with second best. Swadeshi for the very poor may mean a real sacrifice of money. But how far this is really the case is very doubtful. If one should regard a standard of simple living, conditioned by quality rather than quantity of wants, where durability of materials was preferred to cheapness alone, it is fairly certain that even the peasant would be better advised to use (real) Swadeshi than foreign goods. And for those better off, for those who have adopted pseudo-European fashions and manners to talk of Swadeshi as a sacrifice is cant of the worst description. It implies entire ignorance of India's achievement in the industrial arts, and an utter lack of faith in India. The blindest prejudice in favour of all things

Indian were preferable to such condescension as that of one who casts aside the husks and trappings of modern luxury, to accept the mother's exquisite gifts as a 'sacrifice'.

Not till the Indian people patronize Indian arts and Industries from a real appreciation of them, and because they recognize them not merely as cheaper, but as better than the foreign, will the Swadeshi movement become complete and comprehensive. If a time should ever come — and at present it seems far off — when Indians recognize that "for the beautification of an Indian house or the furniture of an Indian home, there is no need to rush to European shops in Calcutta or Bombay," there may be a realisation of Swadeshi. But "so long as they prefer to fill their palaces with flaming Brussels carpets, Tottenham-court-road furniture, cheap Italian mosaics, French oleographs, Austrian lustres, German tissues and cheap brocades, there is not much hope." When will Indians make it impossible for any enemy to throw in their teeth a reproach so true as this?

Even more important, then, than the establishment of new Industries on Indian soil, are the patronage and revival of those on the verge of extinction, the purification of those which survive in degraded forms, and the avoidance of useless luxuries, whether made in India or not. Swadeshi must be inspired by a broad and many-sided national sentiment, and must have definitely constructive aims; where such a sentiment exists, Industrial Swadeshi will be its inevitable outcome without effort and without failure. (*).

Humanity is not in want of manufactures. (*).

Already, all over the world, man is labouring beyond all reason, and producing beyond all demand . . . Longer, harder toil for the producer, frenzied, criminal extravagance in the consumer, these are the direct results of the development of manufacturing industries, which tends constantly towards increased production and lower prices." — (Max Nordau.)

This is not civilisation; this is not the art of living. Civilisation consists, not in multiplying our desires and the means of gratifying them, but in the refinement of their quality. Industry per se, is no advantage. The true end of material civilisation, is not production, but use; not labour, but leisure; not to destroy, but to make possible, spiritual culture. A nation which sees its goal rather in the production of things than in the lives of men must in the end deservedly perish. Therefore it is that the Swadeshi movement, a synthesis of effort for the regeneration of India, should be guided by that true political economy that seeks to make men wise and happy, rather than merely to multiply their goods at the cost of physical and spiritual degradation. (*)

Do not then let us compete with Western nations by evolving for ourselves a factory system and a capitalist ownership of the means of production corresponding to theirs. Do not let us toil through all the wearisome stages of the industrial revolution — destruction of the guilds, elimination of small workshops, the factory system, laissez faire, physical degeneration, hideousness, trusts, the unemployed and unemployable, and whatever may be to follow. We may perhaps not think on these things now, we may be too much concerned with the political problems of today. But if we are wise, we, who want India to be free, must bethink ourselves that, when that freedom comes, these problems will be with us still; the possibility of their solution depends on foresight and wisdom now. The history of the industrial revolution in Europe has been a long and sad one, and only now, and slowly, are some of its worst results being recognized, and their remedy devised. That this industrial revolution was in a sense inevitable may be granted, and it may also be that at least the outlines of it must be imposed upon the development of the social organism in the East as well as in the West; and indeed, not only in Japan, but also in India, we see the process already at work. But it is probably possible for Eastern nations to run through some of its stages quickly, and with the experience of other nations as their guide, to avoid some of the worst evils. The Japanese, who are sometimes as much in advance of Europe, as India is behind it, have shown, in spite of the great disorganization

and vulgarisation of their national life that has taken place already, some signs of this pre-vision. (5).

Learn not to waste the vital forces of the nation in a temporary political conflict but understand that art will enable you to re-establish all your arts and industries on a surer basis. Swadeshi must be something more than a political weapon. It must be a religious artistic ideal. (4).

In exchange for this world of beauty that was our birthright, the nineteenth century has made our country a 'dumping ground' for all the vulgar superfluities of European over-production. (4).

Think of our duty from another point of view; is not the ancient virtue of hospitality binding on us? Yet now the shame of hospitality refused is ours; how many have come to India, reverencing her past, ready to learn of her still, and have been sent empty away! the student of Social Economy finds a highly organised society in the process of disintegration without any of the serious and constructive effort required for its re-organisation under changed conditions; the student of Architecture finds a tradition living still, but scorned by a people devoted to the imitation of their rulers, building copies of English palaces and French villas in the very presence of men who still know how to build, and under the shadow of buildings as noble as any that the world has seen. The student of Fine Art is shown inferior imitations of the latest European 'styles,' where he should find some new and living revelation; the decorative artist sees the traditional craftsmen of India thrown out of employment by the mechanical vulgarities of Birmingham and Manchester, without the least effort made to preserve for future generations the accumulated skill and cunning of centuries of the manufacture of materials and wares which have commanded the admiration of the world. The musician of other lands hears little but the gramophone or the harmonium in India; the man of religion finds the crudest materialism replacing a reasoned metaphysic; the lover of freedom beholds a people who can be imprisoned or deported for in-

definite periods without trial, and too divided amongst themselves to offer adequate resistance to this lawlessness; in a word, every man seeking to widen his own outlook, sees but his own face distorted in an Indian mirror. (*).

All this is passing away: when it has gone, men will look back on it with hungry eyes, as some have looked upon the life even of Mediaeval Europe, or of Greece. When civilisation has made of life a business it will be remembered that life was once an art: when culture is the privilege of bookworms, it will be remembered that it was once a part of life itself, not something achieved in stolen movements of relief, from the serious business of being an engine-driver, a clerk, or a Governor. (*).

BEAUTY

Hindu writers say that the capacity to feel beauty (to taste *rasa*) cannot be acquired by study, but is the reward of merit gained in a past life; for many good men and would-be historians of art have never perceived it. (3).

Beauty is not in any special or exclusive sense a property of works of art, but much rather a quality or value that may be manifested by all things that are, in proportion to the degree of their actual being and perfection. Beauty may be recognised either in spiritual or material substances, and if in the latter then either in natural objects or in works of art. Its conditions are always the same. (24).

Beauty is, then perfection apprehended as an attractive power; that aspect of the truth for example which moves the will to grapple with the theme to be communicated. (22).

The traditional doctrine of beauty is not developed with respect to artefacts alone, but universally. It is independent of taste. The recognition of beauty depends on judgement, not on sensation; the beauty

of the aesthetic surfaces depends on their information, and not upon themselves. — The work of art is beautiful, in terms of perfection, or truth and aptitude. Beauty is perfection apprehended as an attractive power; that aspect of the truth, which moves the will to grapple with the theme to be communicated. (58).

The theory of beauty is a matter for philosophers, and artists strive to demonstrate it at their own risk. (3).

The quality of beauty in a work of art is quite independent of its theme. (3).

There are no degrees of beauty: the most complex and the simplest expression remind us of one and the same state. The sonata cannot be more beautiful than the simplest lyric, nor the painting than the drawing, merely because of their greater elaboration. A mathematical analogy is found if we consider large and small circles; these differ only in their content, not in their circularity. (*).

Beauty can never be measured, for it does not exist apart from the artist himself, and the *rasika* (appreciative critic or spectator) who enters into his experience. (3).

The two (lovers) are one flesh because they have remembered their unity of spirit. (*).

There is scarcely a single female figure represented in early Indian art without erotic suggestion of some kind, implied or explicitly expressed and emphasized. (*).



ART

Art is expression" (Croce): Art (*kāvya*) is a statement informed by *rasa*" (*Sahityadarpana*): art is man's handiwork. Art is fine or beautiful to the degree in which it is done finely and achieves its proper intentions; it is not-art or ugly to the degree in which it is done carelessly and fails to achieve its proper intentions. These intentions are always the satisfaction of human necessities, which necessities are never purely practical (physical) nor purely theoretical (spiritual); man needs bread, but does not live by bread alone. When these necessities are purely individual, art is isolated from its environment and requires explanation even to contemporaries, and it is difficult to see why such art should be exhibited. When these necessities are general e.g. (early Italian painting or Indian sculpture), art is comprehensible to all normal contemporaries, and is used rather than exhibited. The latter kind of art may even become "universal", i.e. comprehensible and serviceable beyond its original environment. (44).

Art can then be defined as the embodiment in material of a pre-conceived form. (22).

Art is a language, and will be a dead language if no change in it be permitted, if it is not to be a medium of expression of new ideas and new thoughts, it will lose relatively to the national life. But like the spoken language it can only change nobly, in response to an impulse from within, the irresistible demand for words, in which to communicate the new (emotions) conceptions. The aims of the Indian art are not for one time only, the synthesis of Indian thought is one whole (compound) composed equally of present, past and future. We stand in relation to both; the past has made us what we are, the future we ourselves are moulding; our duty to the future is to enrich, not to destroy the past. The aim and the method are eternal. The formula and the vision must change and widen. The future is to be greater than the past; not contemptuous of it; but its inevitable product, an integral part of it. The message of the old tradition to the new, may be given in the words of a great idealist of the present:

"Singing not our songs, sing thou newer, better.
Thinking not our thoughts think thou bolder, truer.
Dream thou not our dreams, but dream thou as we dreamt.
Let not our dreams die." (23).

It is not to enlarge our collection of bric-a-brac that we ought to study ancient or foreign arts, but to enlarge our own consciousness of being. (8).

The true critic, *rasika*, perceives the beauty of which the artist has exhibited the signs. (*).

The poet is born, not made; but so also is the *rasika* whose genius differs in degree, not in kind; from that of the original artist. (*).

It is of the essence of art to bring back into order the multiplicity of Nature, and it is in this sense that it 'prepares all creatures to return to God.' Decadent art is simply an art that is no longer felt or energized. (*).

T rue art, pure art, never enters into competition with the unattainable perfection of the world, but relies exclusively on its own logic and its own criteria, which cannot be tested by standards of truth or goodness applicable in other fields of activity. (*).

Modern European art endeavours to represent things as they are in themselves, Asiatic and Christian art to represent things as they are in God, or nearer to their source. (*).

Asiatic art is ideal in the mathematical sense: like Nature, not in appearance, but in operation. (*).

Every artist discovers beauty, and every critic finds it again when he tastes of the same experience. (*).

It may be claimed that beauty exists everywhere; and this I do not deny, though I prefer the clearer statement that it may be discovered anywhere. (*).

If bees have been deceived by painted flowers, why was honey not provided? . . . The more an image is true to nature, the more it lies. (*).

Mere narration (*nirvaha, itihasa*), bare utility, are not art, or are only art in a rudimentary sense. Only the man of little wit can fail to recognize that art, by nature, is a well-spring of delight, whatever may have been the occasion of its appearance. On the other hand, there cannot be imagined an art without meaning or use. The doctrine of Art for Art's Sake is disposed of in a sentence quoted in the *Sahiya Darpana*, V.L. Commentary: 'All expression (*vakya*), human or revealed, are directed to an end beyond themselves (*harya-param*) of if not so determined (*ata-partve*) are thereby comparable only to the utterances of a madman.' (*).

Anonymity is thus in accordance with the truth; and it is one of the proudest distinctions of the Hindu culture. The names of the 'authors' of the epics are but shadows, and in later ages it was a constant practice of writers to suppress their own names and ascribe their work to a mythical or famous poet, thereby to gain a better attention for the truth that they would rather claim to have 'heard' than to have 'made'. Similarly, scarcely a single Hindu painter or sculptor is known by name; and the entire range of Sanskrit literature cannot exhibit a single autobiography and but little history. (3).

The absence of names in the history of Indian art is a great advantage to the historian of art, for he is forced to concentrate all his attention upon their work, and its reaction to life and thought as a whole, while all temptation to anecdotal criticism is removed. (6).

In nearly all Indian Art there runs a vein of deep sex-mysticism, not merely are female forms felt to be equally appropriate with the

males to adumbrate the majesty of the over-sour, but the interplay of all psychic and sexual forces is felt in itself to be religious. Here is no thought that passion is degrading but a frank recognition of the close analogy between amorous and religious ecstasy. It is thus that the imager speaking always for the race rather than of personal idiosyncracies set side by side on his cathedral walls the *yogi* and the *apsara*, the saint and the ideal courtesan accepting life as he saw it, he interpreted all its phenomena with perfect catholicity of vision. Such figures and indeed all sculptural embroidery of Indian temples are confined to the exterior walls of the shrine, which is absolutely plain within. Such is the veil of nature's empirical life, enshrining one, not contradicted or identified into variety. (*).

The Indian artist, although a person, is not a personality; his personal idiosyncrasy is at the most a part of his equipment, and never the occasion of his art. All of the greatest Indian works are anonymous, and all that we know of the lives of Indian artists in any field could be printed in a tract of a dozen pages. (8).

Nations are created by artists and poets, not by merchants and politicians. In art lies the deepest life principles. (5).

We ought then, to appreciate Indian art from every point of view, to be equipped with learning, piety, sensibility, knowledge of technique, and simplicity, combining the qualities of the *pandita*, the *bhakta*, the *scarya*, and the alpha — *buddi jana*. (37).

The Indian must see with his own eye. Two things are needful; one that he should be saturated with the traditional art of his race in order that he may know how to see; the other, that he be saturated with the traditional culture of the East that he may know what to see. (*).

Try to believe in the regeneration of India through art, and not by politics and economics alone. A purely material ideal will never give to us the lacking strength to build up a great enduring nation. For that

we need ideals and dreams, impossible and visionary, the food of martyrs and of artists. (*).

The Hindus have never believed in art for art's sake; their art, like that of mediaeval Europe, was an art for love's sake. (6).

We ought not, then, to like a work of art merely because it is like something we like. It is unworthy to exploit a picture or a phrase merely as a substitute for a beautiful environment or a beloved friend. We ought not to demand to be pleased and flattered, for our true need is to be touched by love or fear. The meaning of art is far deeper than that of its immediate subject. (6).

What is art, or rather what was art? In the first place the property of the artist, a kind of knowledge and skill by which he knows not what ought to be made, but how to imagine the form of the things that is to be made, and how to embody this form in suitable material, so that the resulting artefact may be used. The ship-builder builds, not for aesthetic reasons, but in order that men may be able to sail on the water; it is a matter of fact that the well-built ship will be beautiful, but it is not for the sake of making something beautiful that the ship-builder goes to work; it is a matter of fact that a well made icon will be beautiful, in other words, that it will please when seen by those for whose use it was made, but the imager is casting his bronze primarily for use and not as a mantelpiece ornament or for the museum showcase. (*).

I do not perceive a fundamental distinction of arts as national — Indian, Greek or English. All art interprets life; it is like the Vedas, eternal, independent of the accidental conditions of those who see or hear. (*).

Art is not an aesthetic but a rhetorical activity. (*).



Indian art and culture was a joint creation of the Dravidian and Aryan genius, a welding together of symbolic and representative, abstract and explicit, language and thought. (2).

In the first place all Hindu art, (Brahmanical and Mahayana Buddhist) is religious. (6).

We are peculiar people. I say this with reference to the fact that whereas almost all other peoples have called their theory of art or expression a "Rhetoric" and have thought of art as a kind of knowledge, we have invented an "Aesthetic" and think of Art as a kind of feeling.

The Greek original of the word "aesthetic" means "perception by the senses, especially by feeling." (24).

Art contains in itself the deepest principles of life, the truest guide to the greatest art, the Art of Living. The true life, the ideal of Indian culture, is itself a unity and an art, because of its inspiration by one ruling passion, the desire to realise a spiritual inheritance. All things in India have been valued in the light of this desire.

The artist is not a special kind of man, but every man who is not an artist in some field, every man without a vocation, is an idler. The kind of artist that a man should be, carpenter, painter, lawyer, farmer or priest, is determined by his own nature, in other words by his nativity. The only man who has a right to abstain from all constructive activities is the monk, who has also surrendered all those uses that depend on things that can be made and is no longer a member of society. No man has a right to any social status, who is not an artist. (16).

The anonymity of the artist belongs to a type of culture dominated by the longing to be liberated from oneself. All the force of this philosophy is directed against the delusion "I am the doer." "I" am not in fact the doer, but the instrument; human individuality is not an end but only a means. The supreme achievement of individual consciousness is to lose or find (both words mean the same) itself in what is both its first beginning and its last end. All that is required of the instrument is efficiency and obedience; it is not for the subject to aspire to the

throne; the constitution of man is not a democracy, but the hierarchy of body, soul and spirit. Is it for the Christian to consider any work "his own", when even Christ has said that "I do nothing of myself"? Or for the Hindu, when Krishna has said, "The Comprehensor cannot form the concept 'I am the doer'"? Or for the Buddhist, for whom it has been said that "To wish that it may be made known that 'I was the author' is the thought of a man not yet adult"? (16).

"It cannot be too clearly understood that the mere representation of nature is never the aim of Indian art. Probably no truly Indian sculpture has been wrought from a living model, or any religious painting copied from life. Possibly no Hindu artist of the old schools ever drew from nature at all. His store of memory pictures, his power of visualization and his imagination were for his purpose finer means, for he desired to suggest the Idea behind sensuous appearance not to give the detail of seeming reality that was in truth but Maya, illusion . . . To mistake Maya for reality were error indeed. 'Men of no understanding think of Me, the unmanifest as having manifestation, knowing not My higher being to be Changeless, Supreme.' (Bhagavad Gita VII. 24)" (27)

Great art or science is the flower of a free national life pouring its abundant energy into ever new channels, giving some new intimation of a truth and harmony before unknown or forgotten. It is not strange that India, after a thousand years of alien government, often puritan and now philistine, economically and morally impoverished, should have lost her position in the world of art. But we believe that India stands upon the threshold of a freedom and a unity greater than any yet realised. If this be so we need not fear for Indian Art: for the new life must find its self-expression. It rests with each individual to make this fruition possible. (*).

There is a close affinity between art and religion which is seldom understood, and we very often overlook the fact that aesthetic and religious spheres exhibit a natural kinship. (30).

Art is the endeavour to transcend the duality of subject and object by the subjectification of nature and objectification of spirit. Religion is the endeavour to live with the Divine as own with own, as lovers with beloved. (30).

SCULPTURE

The best sculpture is primitive rather than suave . . . It is like the outward poverty of God, whereby His glory is nakedly revealed. (3).

The Hindus do not regard the religious, aesthetic and scientific standpoints as necessarily conflicting, and in all their finest work, whether musical, literary or plastic, those points of view, now-a-days so sharply distinguished are inseparably united. (6).

The purpose of the imager was neither self-expression nor the realisation of beauty. He did not choose his own problems, but, like the Gothic sculptor, obeyed a hieratic canon. He did not regard his own or his own fellow's work from the standpoint of connoisseurship or aestheticism — not, that is to say, from the standpoint of the philosopher, or aesthete, but from that of a pious artisan. To him the theme was all in all. (3).

In these figures (deities with many arms) we cannot speak of the many arms as 'additional members' because in a human being they might appear to be such These images belong in a world of their own, and their artistic merit must be judged solely by the logic of the world they represent. It is no criticism of a fairy tale to say that in our world we meet no fairies: It is no criticism of a beast-fable to say that after all animals do not talk English or Sanskrit. Nor is it a criticism of an Indian icon to point out that we know no human being with more than two arms!

To appreciate any art, we ought not to concentrate our attention upon its peculiarities — ethical or formal — but should endeavour to take for granted whatever the artist has taken for granted. No motif appears bizarre to those who have been familiar with it for generations.

For those should not air their likes and dislikes in Oriental art, who, when they speak of art, mean mere illustration: for there they will rarely meet with what they seek, and the expression of their disappointment becomes wearisome. (*).

The vitality of a tradition persists only so long as it is fed by intensity of imagination. (*)

SCHOOLS OF STYLES OF INDIAN ART

The schools of styles of Indian Art as known by actual remains may be classified as follows:

Early Buddhist, B.C. 300-50 A.D.: pillar edicts, Sanchi and Mahabodhi stupas and railings (all Asokan, 3rd Cen. B.C.); Mathura fragments; Amaravati and Bharhut stupa, and Sanchi Gates (2nd century B.C.) Kushan or Graeco-Buddhist, 50-320 A.D.; Gandhara sculptures of the Afghanistan frontier; sculpture at Mathura; architecture at Gandhara, and later in Kashmir (Marthand, 8th cen.); Mahabodhi great temple (ca. 140 A.D.); Besnagar *garuda* pillar; transition of early Buddhist to Gupta at Amaravati (railing, 150-200 A.D.); early painting at Ajanta and in Orissa.

Gupta, 320-600 A.D.: sculpture and architecture (stupa, etc.) at Sarnath; at Anuradhapura (2nd cen. B.C. to 9th cen. A.D.); sculpture and painting at Ajanta; painting and secular architecture at Sigiriya (Ceylon, 5th cen. A.D.).

Classic Indian, 600-850 A.D. but especially the 8th century; latest and best painting at Ajanta; sculpture and architecture at Elura, Elephants, Mamallapuram, Anuradhapura and Borubudur (Java).

Mediaeval, 9th to 18th century (surviving in Ceylon, Travancore, Rajputana, etc., up to the British period, and in Nepal to the present day); Shaivite Bronzes (Nataraja etc) sculpture and architecture of Tanjore (10th to 12th cen.); Vijayanagar (14th to 16th cen.) Madura (17th cen.), Auvadaiyar Kovil, Tarapatri (16th cen.), sculpture and architecture; Chalukyam architecture of Mysore etc. (Belur Halebad, 12th to 13th cen.); sculpture and architecture in Java up to 14th century, in Cambodia to the 12th; Polannarua sculpture and architecture (8th to 13th cen.), Kandy (16th to 18th century); Jain temples at Abu (11th to 13th cen.), Orissa (Bhuvaneswar, Konarak, Puri, 9th to 13th century) Khajuraho (ca. 1000 A.D.); Rajput painting and architecture (up to 19th cen.); Mughal painting and architecture (16th to 18th century);

Nepalese Buddhist bronzes; art of Burma and Siam.

British, 1760 —; decline of crafts; survival of architecture; school of art-painting; *swadesi*; modern Bengali painting. (6).

Chief types of Buddha Image: The seated figure has three main forms, the first representing pure Samadhi, the highest station of ecstasy — here the hands are crossed in the lap in what is known as DHYANA MUDRA, the 'seal of meditation' (of Buddha at Anuradhapura); the second, in which the right hand is moved forward across the right knee to touch the earth, in what is known as RHUMISPARSA MUDRA (Cf. Painting at Dambulla, Ceylon) the 'seal of calling the earth to witness'; . . . the third with the hands raised before the chest in the position known as DHARMA CHAKRA MUDRA, the 'seal of turning the wheel of the law' (cf. Buddha at Sarnath). In a fourth type the right hand is raised and the palm is turned outward, making the gesture known as ABHAYA MUDRA, the 'seal of dispelling fear' (cf. Buddhas at Mathura and Anuradhapura). The last pose is characteristic of standing figures, where the left hand grasps the end of the robe. In Bodhisatva figures the right hand is very often extended in the VARA MUDRA or the 'seal of charity' (cf. Avalokitesvara of Nepal), while the left hand holds an attribute, such as the lotus (Cf. Gautama Buddha of Ceylon and Avalokitesvara of Nepal). But the variety of Bodhisatvas is great. Another characteristic pose is known as VITARKA MUDRA' the 'seal of argument' indicating the act of teaching (Cf. Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva of Ceylon Bronze). Other forms are generally self-explanatory, like the sword of wisdom which is held aloft by Manjusri (Cf. Manjusri Bodhisattva of Java) to cleave the darkness of ignorance. (31).

RAJPUT PAINTING

Very different in character is Rajput Painting, that Hindu art which as Abul Fasl himself said "surpasses our conception of things." It has a range of content and a depth of passion foreign to the sentimental Persian Idylls and battle and hunting scenes, and rarely touched in the Moghul studies of individual character. All the self-restraint and

the abandonment, the purity and wild extravagance, the tenderness and the fury of Hinduism find expression here. The art is religious, lyrical and epic. It has many of the qualities of folk-song and ballad. Portraiture is comparatively rare . . . For the Moghul courtier, life was a glorious pageant: for the Rajput and the Brahman, life was an eternal sacrament. It is a descendent of that art of tempera painting which we lose sight of at Ajanta. (*).

THE KANGRA SCHOOL

What Chinese art achieved for landscape is here accomplished for love . . . The arms of the lovers are about each other's necks, eye meets eye, the whispering *sakhis* (confidantes) speak of nothing else but the course of Krishna's courtship, the very animals are spell-bound by the sound of his flute, and the elements stand still to hear the Ragas and Ragini's (*).



The Rajput art) It is folk art descended from a more magnificent tradition; those who possess the faculty of imaginative reconstruction will catch in this folk art the accents of a loftier speech than that of its intrinsic achievement. (*).

The Rajput Paintings are especially serious, epic and romantic. They often express a profound sense of sympathy for all natural life and sense of the fundamental unity of all created things. The religious symbolism is sometimes mythological, sometimes humanistic. The types are ideal rather than conventional. (*).

MOGHUL PAINTING

The most characteristic features of Moghul Painting are its profound interest in individual character, its analytic rather than synthetic method and its concern with the doings of kings and courtiers, rather than with the visions of saints or the lyric symbolism of an agricultural race. (*).

The best Moghul work of the XVIth century is the most Persian, and of the XVIIth century the most Indian. The Moghul style of painting (as well as architecture) though built up with the materials of many different traditions is the most undeniably original, in the same sense that the Moghul culture in India is as a whole original. It is true that it combines something new . . . it finds its truest expression in the character of such a man as Akbar. (*).

JAINA ART

The Jaina art of painting is one of pure draughtsmanship; the pictures are brilliant statements of the facts of the epic, where every event is seen in the light of eternity . . . There is no preoccupation with pattern, colour, or texture for their own sake, but these are achieved with inevitable assurance in a way that could not have been the case had they been directly sought. The drawing has in fact the perfect equilibrium of a mathematical equation, or a page of composer's score.

Theme and formula compose an inseparable unity, text and pictures form a continuous relation of the same dogma in the same key. (48).

PERSIAN PAINTING

Persian Painting is pretty, even beautiful, it is graceful, lyrical, exquisite in colouring and design, but it is never passionate. It tells us of magnificent adventures and of scented gardens, not of the love of God or the infinite joy and sorrow of the loves of women and men. It does not reveal to us the character of men or the souls of animals and trees and mountains. Its types are conventional rather than ideal, and one wearies of the languid mannerism, notwithstanding its marvellous charm. (*).

INDIAN COLONIAL

To apply the name of "Indian colonial" to the several national schools, after the end of the eighth century, is an injustice to the vigor and originality of the local cultures. There is scarcely any monument of Further Indian or Indonesian art which, however nearly it may approach an Indian type, could be imagined as existing on Indian soil; equally in architecture, sculpture and in the drama and minor arts, each country develops its own formula, freely modifying, adding to, or rejecting older Indian forms, India, indeed, provided the material of a higher culture and perhaps a ruling aristocracy, to less developed and less conscious races; but the culture of these races, plastic, musical, dramatic and literary as it flourished in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries and still survives in Java and Bali, may justly be called native. Japan, which owes more than is generally realised to direct Indian influence, is but a more obvious example of the same condition. Thus the history of Indian and Indonesian art deserves in the general history of art a higher place than can be denoted by the term colonial. It is true that like much of Chinese and Nipponese art it can only be understood in the light of Indian studies; but it derives its energy from indigenous sources. (2).

YAKSHAS

The designation Yaksha was originally practically synonymous with Deva or Devata and no essential differences can be made between Yakshas and Devas. (68).

Early Yaksha iconography has formed the foundation of later Hindu and Buddhist iconography. (68).

In India it becomes more than ever clear that thought and culture are due in equal measure both to Aryan and indigenous genius (68).

MUSIC

Music has been a cultivated art in India for at least three thousand years. The chant is an essential element of Vedic ritual; and the references in later Vedic literature, the scriptures of Buddhism, and the Brahmanical epics show that it was already highly developed as a secular art in centuries preceding the beginning of the Christian era. Its zenith may perhaps be assigned to the Imperial age of the Guptas – from the fourth to the sixth century A.D. This was the classic period of Sanskrit literature, culminating in the drama of Kalidasa; and to the same time is assigned the monumental treatise on the theory of music and drama. (3).

Since Indian music is not written, and cannot be learnt from books, except in theory, it will be understood that the only way for a foreigner to learn it must be to establish between himself and his Indian teachers that special relationship of disciple and master which belongs to Indian education in all its phases: he must enter into the inner spirit and must adopt many of the outer conventions of Indian life, and his study must continue until he can improvise the songs under Indian conditions and to the satisfaction of Indian professional listeners. He must possess not only the imagination of an artist, but also a vivid memory and an ear sensitive to microtonal inflections. (3).



India has, besides the tambura, many solo instruments. By far the most important of these is the *vina*. This classic instrument, which ranks with the violin of Europe and the koto of Japan, and second only to the voice in sensitive response, differs chiefly from the tambura in having frets, the notes being made with the left hand and the strings plucked with the right. The delicate nuances of microtonal grace are obtained by deflection of the strings, whole passages being played in this manner solely by a lateral movement of the left hand, without a fresh plucking. While the only difficulty in playing the tambura is to maintain an even rhythm independently of the song, the *vina* presents all the difficulties of technique that can be imagined, and it is said that at least twelve years are required to attain proficiency. (3).

The *vina* is the classic solo instrument of Hindu culture, carried always by Sarasvatī, goddess of learning and science, and by the *rishi* Nārada and by various *rāginis*. (7).

This Indian music is essentially impersonal; it reflects an emotion and an experience which are deeper and wider and older than the emotion or wisdom of any single individual. Its sorrow is without tears, its joy without exultation and it is passionate without any loss of serenity. It is in the deepest sense of the words all-human. But when the Indian prophet speaks of inspiration, it is to say that the Vedas are eternal, and all that the poet achieves by his devotion is to hear to see: it is then Sarasvatī, the goddess of speech and learning, or Narada, whose mission it is to disseminate occult knowledge in the sound of the strings of his *vina*, or Krishna, whose flute is forever calling us to leave the duties of the world and follow Him — it is these, rather than any human individual, who speak through the singer's voice, and are seen in the movements of the dancer. (3).

The Indian singer is a poet, and the poet a singer. The dominant subject matter of the songs is human or divine love in all its aspects, or the direct praise of God, and the words are always sincere and passionate. The more essentially the singer is a musician, however, the more the words are regarded merely as the vehicle of the music: in art-

song the words are always brief, voicing a mood rather than telling any story, and they are used to support the music with little regard to their own logic — precisely as the representative element in a modern painting merely serves as the basis for an organisation of pure form or colour. (3).

The great age of Indian music was probably as long ago as the 5th century A.D. (7).

AN INDIAN MUSICAL PARTY

Perhaps you are in the South. You have gone to a musical party, a wedding at the house of a friend, you are seated with many others on the cotton carpet, and before you is a band of drummers, oboists and players of the vīna and tamburi. A Brahman drums on an earthen pot. A slender girl of fifteen years sits demurely on the floor, dressed in silk brocade and golden chains, her feet and arms bare, and flowers in her hair. Her mother is seated near, back against the wall; she it is that trained the girl, and now she watches her proudly. The only sounds are those of the four strings of the ivory inlaid tamburi and the tapping of the drum. As you are waiting for the music to begin, a man with untidy hair and a saffron robe comes in, and your host gives him eager welcome, laying a white cloth on a stool for him to sit upon. All know him well — he is a sanyasi who wanders from temple to temple, preaching little, nor performing many ceremonies, but singing tevarams and the hymns of Manikka Vacagar. As he sits silent, all eyes are turned towards him, and conversation drops to a whisper. Presently he sings some hymn of passionate adoration of Siva. His voice is thin but very sweet, melting the heart; his gentle strong personality holds every listener spell-bound not least the little dancer to whom the words and music are so familiar; he is the dancer's and the drummers' friend and hero as much as yours. Some one asks for a special hymn, 'My God, why hast thou forsaken me?' and he sings:

Me, meanest one, in mercy mingling Thou didst make Thine own,
Lord of the Bull! Lo, thou'st forsaken me! O Thou who wear'st
Garb of fierce tiger's skin! Abiding Uttarakosamangai's King!

Thou of the braided lock! I fainting sink. Our Lord, uphold thou me!

What though I press no more the crimson lips of maidens fair,
With swelling breasts; behold! Thou hast forsaken me; though in,
Not out Thy worthy service, Uttarakosamangai's King,
I am! Thou mad'st false me Thine own, why dost Thou leave me now?*

Soon he rises, smiles at the musicians and speaks for a few moments with your host, and so goes away. And then you forget for a time this dreamer, in the beauty of the dance and the clamour of the drums. Of the dance you never weary; there is eternal wonder in the perfect refinement of its grace, and the mental concentration needed to control each muscle so completely; for this is not the passionate posturing born of a passing mood, but the elaborated art of three thousand years, an art that deceives you by its seeming simplicity, but in reality idealizes every passion, human and divine; for it tells of the intensity of Radha's love for Krishna. Radha was the leader of the herd-girls in Brindaban, and she, more than any, realised the depth and sweetness of the love of Krishna.

Whatever place is held in the heart of Europe by the love of Dante for his Lady Beatrice, of Paolo for Francesca, of Deirdre for Naoisi, is held in India by the love stories of Rama and Sita, of Padmavati and Ratan Sen, and the love of Radha and Krishna. Most wonderful of these was the love of Radha; in the absolute self-surrender of the human soul in her to the Divine in Krishna is summed up all love. In this consecration of humanity there is no place for the distinction — always foreign to Indian thought — of sacred and profane. But when in love the finite is brought into the presence of the infinite, when the consciousness of inner and outer is destroyed in the ecstasy of union with one beloved, the moment of realisation is expressed in Indian poetry, under the symbol of the speech of Radha, the leader of the Gopis, with Krishna the Divine Cowherd. And Krishna is the Lord, Radha, the soul that strives in self-surrender, for inseparable oneness. And so both have told of the Lord, — the ascetic, for whom all earthly beauty is a vain thing,

*Adapted from the translation by Dr. Pope.

and the dancing girl, who is mistress of every art that charms the senses.

The music is to last all night; but you have to be home ere dawn, and as you pass along the road in the bright moonlight, you see that life, and the renunciation of life, lead both to the same goal at last. Both ascetic and musician shall be one Brahman with himself; it is only a question of time more or less, and time, as every one knows, is unreal.

Oh Lord, look not upon my evil qualities!

Thy name, O Lord, is same-sightedness,

Make us both one Brahman.

This Hindu song of Surdas is said to have been sung by a dancing girl at a Rajput court. And there comes to you too the thought, that "Whoso seeth all beings in That One, and That in all, henceforth shall doubt no more."

All this is passing away; when it is gone, men will look back on it with hungry eyes, as some have looked upon the life even of Mediaeval Europe, or of Greece. When civilization has made of life a business, it will be remembered that life was once an art; when culture is the privilege of bookworms, it will be remembered that it was once a part of life itself, not something achieved in stolen moments of relief from the serious business of being an engine-driver, a clerk, or a Governor.

Let those who are still part of such a life take note of it, that they may tell their children of it when it is nothing but a memory. A 'practical' and 'respectable' world has no place for the dreamer and the dancer; they belong to the old Hindu towns where the big temples and the chatrams tell of the faith and munificence of kings and merchant princes. In Madras, there is the military band, or the music hall company on tour, — what does it want with ascetics or with dancing girls? (5).



JEWELLERY

From the earliest times the Indians have loved to adorn themselves with jewels, indeed, the modern work descends in an unbroken line from the primitive and still surviving use of garlands of fresh flowers, and of seeds. From these are derived the names of the work in gold, such as champa-bud necklace. Many of the names of jewels mentioned in Panini's grammar (4th century B.C.) are still in use. The long Punjabi necklaces are called "garlands of enchantment," *Mohanmala* earrings are called ear flowers (*Karn-phul*). The forms are suggestive but never initiative of the flower prototypes. Perhaps no people in the world have loved jewellery so well as the Indians. It is a religious duty to provide a wife with jewels as with dress: she should never appear before her husband without them, but in his absence on a journey she should discard them temporarily, and after his death forever. One need be an Indian woman, born and bred in the great tradition to realise the sense of power that such jewels as earrings and anklets lend their wearers, she knows the full delight of swinging jewels touching her cheeks at every step, and the fascination of the tinkling bells upon her anklets. Some have called her nose-rings barbarous and her love of jewels childish, but there are also those who think that she knows best what best becomes her. (6).

The decorative principles so well understood by the old Sinhalese and Tamil jewellers are now generally abandoned and almost all make use of European trade catalogues as the sources of their designs, to meet the demand of the "educated" Sinhalese who want "improvised jewellery". (*).

It is a compliment to true Sinhalese art to say that the jewellery now made has nothing characteristically Sinhalese about it. With the loss of the traditions of good design, has gone the capacity for fine work; not only is it impossible to get fine old work copied, but modern settings in particular are so insecure that the stones frequently fall out in a few days. Sinhalese jewellery today had indeed sunk to "the level

of the extravagantly hard and vulgar trinketry of Birmingham, Paris and Vienna." (7).

Perhaps the most beautiful of all Indian jewellery is that of Jaffna in Ceylon. (7).

The Kandyan Sinhalese jewellery is closely related to Dravidian types. (7).

Of few educated Indians can it now be said that they wear jewellery worth a second glance; for all the modern work is copied from the trade catalogues of Europe. (7).

FOLKLORE

There is, perhaps no subject that has been more extensively investigated and more prejudicially misunderstood by the modern scientist than that of folklore. (24).

To suppose that old Folklore motives (of which the origin is left unexplained) are taken up into scriptural contexts, in which they survive as Foreign bodies, is to invert the order of nature, the fact is that scriptural formulae survive in Folklore, it may even be long after the 'Scripture' itself has been romanticised or rationalised in more sophisticated circles. In whichever context they are preserved correctly, the motives retain their intelligibility, whether or not they are actually understood by any given audience. These motives are not primarily 'Figures of speech' but 'Figures of thought', and whoever still understands them is not reading meanings INTO them but only reading IN them, the significance that was originally concreated with them. (24).

Myth is not distorted records of historical events.

It is only when we realise that the arts and philosophies of our remote ancestors were 'fully developed' and that we are dealing with the relics of an ancient WISDOM, as valid now as it ever was that the

thought of the earliest thinkers will become intelligible to us. We shall only be able to understand the astounding uniformity of the folklore motives all over the world, and the devoted care that has everywhere been taken to ensure their correct transmission, if we approach these MYSTERIES (for they are nothing less) in the spirit in which they have been transmitted from 'STONE AGE UNTIL NOW' with the confidence of little children indeed, but not the childish self-confidence of those who hold that wisdom was born with themselves. ().

GARLANDS

It was highly characteristic of Indian art that these 'garlands' should be in design entirely suggestive and in no way imitative of the forms suggested. No Indian craftsman sets a flower in a vase before him and worries out of it some sort of ornament by taking thought . . . For a decorative art not intimately related to his own experience can have no intrinsic vitality. And so the goldsmith's chains are not like real flowers, but they mean flowers to himself and to the wearer of them.

The same principles apply to the treatment of birds in jewellery. To wear a real bird would be considered barbarous and to imitate a real bird very closely would be idle . . . But all that is beautiful in the general idea of the bird form and poise can be suggested. (7).

COSTUME

The great majority of Indians wear cotton garments, and it is from India that all such names as *chintz*, *calico*, *shawl*, and *bandana* have come into English since the 18th century. (7).

ORNAMENT

The correct and traditional meaning of ornament is simply equipment. (*).

COMPETITION

It is suicidal to compete with European basis of cheapness. Competition should be on the basis of quality. (4).

The loss of artistic understanding more than anything else has ruined Indian industries and prevents the possibility of their revival. (4).

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Original means coming from its source within like water from a spring. (*).

There can be no property in ideas. The individual does not make them, but FINDS THEM; let him only see to it that he really takes possession of them, and work will be original in the same sense that the recurrent seasons, sunrise and sunset are ever new although in name the same. (*).

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THE BHAGAVAD GĪTĀ

We must, however, especially mention the *Bhagavad Gītā* as probably the most important single work ever produced in India; this book of eighteen chapters is not, as it has been sometimes called, a "sectarian" work, but one universally studied and often repeated daily from memory by millions of Indians of all persuasions; it may be described as a compendium of the whole Vedic doctrine to be found in the earlier Vedas, Brāhmanas and Upanisads, and being therefore the basis of all the latest developments, it can be regarded as the focus of all Indian

religion. To this we must add that the pseudo-historical Krishna and Arjuna are to be identified with the mythical Agni and Indra. (28).

A very large number of Hindus, very many millions certainly, daily repeat from memory a part, or in some cases even the whole, of the *Bhagavad Gītā*. This recitation is a chanting; and no one who has heard Sanskrit poetry thus recited, as well as understanding it, can really judge of it as poetry. The style is quite simple and without ornament, like that of the rest of the Epic, and the Upanisads; it is not yet the ornamented classical style of the Dramas. On the whole I think the judgements of professional scholars are to be discounted, for many reasons personally, I should think a good comparison, poetically, would be with the best of mediaeval Latin hymns. (32).

The *BHAGAVAD GĪTĀ* says, "Better one's own duty, though devoid of merit, than the duty of another well discharged". And this is the underlying theme of the whole Hindu social and religious structure. To the prince the duties of princehood are the one path of life; to the warrior the duties of his caste and vocation. The activities not ordained by caste and vocation are, however excellently performed, the gravest of sins and severely punishable by the state. (39).

The universal acceptance of the *Bhagavad Gītā*, in which the Upanishad doctrines, combined with the path of devotion to a personal deity and of spiritual progress through selfless fulfilment of vocation are first and fully set forth. (39).

The orthodox conception of devotional religion thus evolved is summarised with supreme genius in the most popular of all Indian scriptures, the *Bhagavad Gītā* — the one book with which the student of India, even the student of Indian art if he confines himself to a single book, should familiarise himself. Here we find the religious philosophy of Indian society, not that of any particular ascetic order. The teaching is that spiritual freedom (*moksa, nirvana, the summon bonum*, here conceived in terms of union with the Supreme Being) is best attained through a selfless devotion to the fulfilment of function (*dharma*), and

by loving devotion to the deity, under whatsoever form he may be worshipped. (44).

The *Bhagavad Gīta* is also the chief gospel of action without attachment: change, says Krishna, is the law of life, therefore act according to duty, not clinging to any object of desire, but like the actor in a play, who knows that his mask (*persona*-lity) is not himself. (7).

The *Bhagavad Gītā* (in the *Mahābhārata*) consists of a dialogue between Krishna and the hero Arjuna, on the eve of battle. Arjuna puts forward pacifistic objections to the slaying of kinsmen in battle for the sake of empire. Krishna in reply expounds the doctrine of *sva-dharma* ("own duty"), i.e. the performance function appropriate to one's born status (caste); the path of action (*karma-mārga*) is incumbent on the individual, and the surest means of spiritual progress: "therefore fight". The philosophy of the Upanisads affords consolation: it is only these mortal bodies of men in which That One (Brahman, Purusa) manifests continually, that can be slain: Arjuna should not be dismayed by what we now call the problem of evil, since That One, the only reality, cannot be injured or slain. Arjuna is still bewildered by the liability of man to error. Krishna replies to this by expounding the doctrine of *bhakti*, loving devotion to the deity (himself); one who renounces the fruit of actions (is without personal ambition), and worships Me with undivided heart, be it even a sinner, a woman, or a Śūdra, I release from the cycle of transmigration, he comes unflinchingly to Me. And who is Krishna? No one knoweth Me; beyond this manifested self, hidden therein by the three *gunas* and by *māyā* is my higher, timeless Being. I am the source of the forthgoing of the Universe, and the place of its dissolution; all this is strung on Me, like rows of pearls upon a thread; I have no needs, nor ends to be accomplished; I mingle in action only lest righteousness should fail on earth'. He who decides to read only one book on India should read the *Bhagavad Gītā*; for though in form it is specifically Vaisnava, its application is universal and it is read and known by heart to millions, of all sects. All the guiding forces of Indian civilisation, and much of its detail, are to be found in the Gita, enunciated in language of unsurpassed power and beauty. (44).

The *Gita* or song, has become a gospel universally acceptable to all Indian sects. No single work of equal length so well expresses the characteristic trend of Indian thought, or so completely depicts the Indian ideal of character. It speaks of diverse ways of salvation – that is, escaping from self and knowing God: by love, by works, and by learning. God has two modes of being, the unmanifest and unconditioned, the manifest and conditioned. (29).

There are hundreds of thousands of Indians even now who daily repeat from knowledge by heart either the whole or some large part of the *Bhagavad Gita*: others more learned can recite hundreds of thousands of longer texts. (57).

YOGA

This is the practice of *Yoga*, whereby enlightenment and emancipation are sought to be attained by meditation calculated to release the individual from empirical consciousness . . .

The essence of the method lies in the concentration of thought upon a single point, carried so far that the duality of subject and object is resolved into a perfect unity – “when”, in the words of Schelling, “the perceiving self merges in the self-perceived. At that moment we annihilate time and the duration of time; we are no longer in time, but time, or rather eternity itself, is in us.” A very beautiful description of the yogi is given as follows in the *Bhagavad Gita*, and as quoted here in a condensed form applies almost equally to Buddhist and Brāhmanical practice, for the yoga is a praxis rather than a form of sectarian belief:—

Abiding alone in a secret place, without craving and without possessions, he shall take his seat upon a firm seat, neither over-high nor over-low, and with the working of the mind and of the senses held in check, with body, head and neck maintained in perfect equipoise, looking not round about him, so let him meditate, and thereby reach the peace of the Abyss: and the likeness of one such, who knows the

boundless joy that lies beyond the senses and is grasped by intuition, and who swerves not from truth, is that of a lamp in a windless place that does not flicker. (3).

RELIGION

The Christian is invited to participate in a symposium (of religious) —; not to preside — for there is Another who presides unseen — but as one of many guests. (25).

Our modern antipathy to religion, and our social reluctance to speak of God, are largely the result of what we called above the "sentimentalizing" of religion, and the general endeavour to make of the great religious heroes, notably and the Christ and the Buddha, the sort of men we can approve of and also by an elimination of the marvellous features in their "lives", the sort of men to whom we can attribute an historical reality, and in whom we can therefore "believe"; we are bewildered by the man who can say "I know that my Redeemer liveth", but is far from being convinced that he ever lived. (15).

Many of us are not yet, or are no longer, blinded by an ambition to be in any sense your rivals, to convert you to our ways of thinking, or persuade you to adopt our social patterns; our hope is only that your world may come to its own senses and return to that "inheritance" of truth that must be called the birthright of all mankind, if it be true that, as St. Ambrose says, "All that is true, by whomsoever it has been said, is from the Holy Spirit," whom we all alike acknowledge when we admit a divine paternity, and whom, in the words of St. Augustine, "The whole human race confesses to be the author of the world." (10).

HINDUISM AND BUDDHISM

The more superficially one studies Buddhism, the more it seems to differ from the Brahmanism in which it originated; the more profound our study, the more difficult it becomes to distinguish Buddhism from Brahmanism, or to say in what respects, if any, Buddhism is really unorthodox. (28).

Hinduism and Buddhism. The two schools (Hinayanistic and Mahayanistic) originally flourished together in Burma, Siam, Cambodia, Java and Bali, side by side with a Hinduism with which they often combined. (28).

It would hardly be an exaggeration to say that a faithful account of Hinduism might well be given in the form of a categorical denial of most of the statements that have been made about it, alike by European scholars and by Indians trained in our modern sceptical and evolutionary modes of thought. (38).

There are many gods in Hindu pantheon, but they are no more than the imaginative shadowing forth of an all-compassing, all penetrating spirit (*).

Hinduism emerges, not as a post-Vedic development, atheistic declension from the lofty visions of the Upanishads, but as something handed on from a prehistoric past, ever-changing and yet ever essentially itself, raised at various times by devotional ecstasy and philosophic speculation to heights beyond the grasp of thought, and yet preserving in its popular aspects the most archaic rites and animistic imagery. (42).

CASTE. (*varna*, colour; *jati*, birth), with religious sanction, forms the basis of the social order. Governs matters of bed, board, and occupation; but occupational restrictions have never been strict, and even the early law books permit various occupations to Brahmins, especially in time of need. Theoretically four castes, viz. Brahmins, Ksatriya, Vaisya and Sudra; the first three of these are "twice-born", receive initiation at puberty, wear the sacred thread, and may study the Vedas. Brahmanas ("Brahmins"), the priestly caste; their natural home the hermitage, but act also as chaplains and king's ministers, conducting sacrifices and acting as advisers. Represent an idealisation of poverty, and may not "sell the Vedas", i.e. be paid for teaching; must live by gifts, and actually have a great reputation for greed. To be a priest in the sense of temple official is regarded as demeaning. (44).

....We can only suppose that Buddhism has been admired above all for what it is not. (28)

It (caste) is the nearest approach that has yet been made towards a Society where there shall be no attempt to realise a competitive equality, but where all interests are regarded as identical. (44)

A society can only be considered truly civilised when it is possible for everyman to earn his living by the very work he would rather be doing than anything else in the world — a condition that has only been attained in social orders integrated on the basis of vocation — Svadharma. (*).

REINCARNATION

Reincarnation is not an orthodox Indian doctrine, but only a popular belief. (28).

SAIVA SIDDHANTA

The great developments in Saiva Theology after the classical period are found in the Saiva Siddhanta system of southern India. The scriptures of this devotional system include the *Tevaram* (psalms of the four great Tamil hymnists), the *Tiruvachakam* of Manikka Vachakar, the mystical works of Meikanda Deva and his followers, in all, mainly from the seventh to fourteenth century, but still a living literature. The devotional songs are to be heard every day in the great southern temples, and in the streets of the southern cathedral cities — such as Madura or Tanjore — where the life of a great capital has centred around ancient shrines, whose enclosures and towering gateways dominate the city visually as the ancient and living faith informs its life. Siva is represented iconographically, "non-manifest," by the *lingam*, usually established in the main shrine of a temple, and by a great variety of manifested forms, both gracious and terrible. Of all these forms, the best known and perhaps the most significant is that of Nataraja ("Lord of the Dance") presenting the cosmic activity of the deity — more particularly, the Five Activities, or Powers of Creation, Maintenance, Destruction and the Embodiment and Release of Souls: "Our Lord is the Dancer, who like the heat latent in firewood, diffuses his power in mind and matter and makes them dance in their turn."

The worship of this deity in this form is only truly accomplished when the cosmic dance is realized as taking place with the consciousness of the devotee himself, in accordance with the Sanskrit text, "*devam-bhutva, devam yajet*" — "only by becoming the god, may he worship the god." It will be seen that the two icons; the "non-manifest" lingam and the manifested Nataraja, represent concepts comparable with Ruysbroeck's divine theology in which the nature of God is described as at once Eternal Rest and Eternal Work. (39).

DRAVIDIANS

The Dravidians are peculiar to India, once universal in India. They are the bearers of a cultural continuity extending from the Stone Age to the present day. Before the second millennium B.C. they formed the bulk of a population thinly scattered throughout India. (*).

The Dravidians developed an early city culture, more ancient than Aryan, perhaps once matriarchal in character. (*).

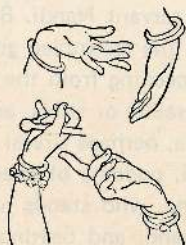
SIVA'S DANCE

This remarkable picture, a typical example of the Kangra Valley School, is a veritable synthesis of Puranic theology and imagery. It breathes the very spirit of the Indian love of the Himalayas, the Land of Gods, the Broceliane of Indian imagination. To begin with names: Siva Himself is dancing in the centre, a white figure clothed in leopard skin, a serpent wreathed about His neck. Before Him Gandharvas and Kinnaras, the essence of whose being is music, are playing on drums and trumpets, led by Siva's servant Nandi. Behind these stands Agni, Lord of Fire. To the left are the assembled gods, with saints and kings below and behind them. Proceeding from the lower part of the picture upwards, we find first three saints or rishis, and between them a feminine figure in blue, an Apsara, perhaps Urvashi or Rambha. Above her is the white figure of Sarasvati, goddess of speech and music, with her vina. She is Sakti of Brahma, who stands next to her, four-headed, holding the Vedas in one hand, and beating a drum. To the left of

Sarasvati is the Rishi Narada; above him, the six-headed Karttikeya, and above him again the blue figure of Vishnu, chank and discus in his hands, beating a green-striped drum. (I do not understand the absence of Lakshmi). Left of Vishnu are Surya (The Sun, red) and Chandra (the Moon, white), and beyond these are kings and saints. Nearest to Siva is Ganesha, the elephant-headed, playing on Cymbals. All these, like a chorus, take part in the divine dance. To the right is Sakti, seated (as Raj Rajesvari) on a throne, surrounded by attendant Apsaras, holding a goad and noose, and gazing in a mirror at Her own loveliness. A great tree spreads its branches above Her throne. All are standing on the golden floor of heaven, Kailas, the paradise of Siva, girt round with snowy white Himalayan peaks. Rolling clouds drift along their summits; devas or angels appearing in these throw down a rain of star-like flowers. Far below are the forest-covered mountain slopes, and the green plains of Hindustan. The Dance of Siva has two explanations, the one belonging to Puranic myth, the other mystic. The latter alone concerns us here. "Our Lord", says a Tamil text, "is the Dancer Who, like the heat latent in firewood, diffuses His power in Mind and Matter and makes them dance in their turn."* He is the life in all things conscious, from gods and men down to the smallest particle of dust. (47).

**Tiruvataṅgar Purānam*, Puttaraivāṭil venracarukkam, stanza 75.

*See P. Arunachalam, *Spolia Zeylanica*, Vol. VI., Part 22
Sept. 1909, where nearly all are illustrated.



DANCE OF SIVA-NATARAJA

It may not be out of place to call attention to the grandeur of this conception (Nataraja) itself as a synthesis of science, religion and art. How amazing the range of thought and sympathy of those rishi-artists who first conceived such a type as this, affording an image of reality, a key to the complex tissue of life, a theory of nature, not merely satisfactory to a single clique or race, nor acceptable to the thinkers of one century only but universal in its appeal to the philosopher, the lover, and the artist of all ages and all countries. How supremely great in power and grace this dancing image must appear to all those who have striven in plastic forms to give expression to their intuition of Life. Every part of such an image as this is directly expressive, not of any mere superstition or dogma, but of evident facts. No artist of today, however great, could more exactly or more wisely create an image of that Energy which science must postulate behind all phenomena. If we would reconcile Time with Eternity, we can scarcely do so otherwise than by the conception of alterations of phase extending over vast regions of space and great tracts of time. Especially significant, then, is the phase alternation implied by the drum, and the fire which changes, not destroys. These are but visual symbols of the theory of the day and night of Brahma. In the night of Brahma, Nature is inert, and cannot dance till Siva wills it: He rises from His rapture, and dancing sends through inert matter pulsing waves of awakening sound, lol matter also dances appearing as a glory round about Him. Dancing, He sustains its manifold phenomena. In the fulness of time, still dancing, he destroys all forms and names by fire and gives new rest. This is poetry; but none the less, Science. It is not strange that the figure of Nataraja has commanded the adoration of so many generations past: familiar with all scepticism, expert in tracing all beliefs to primitive superstitions, explorers of the infinitely great and infinitely small, we are worshippers of Nataraja still. (47).

Siva's, Dance, His 'play,' is His activity within the cosmos, — His 'Five Acts', Creation, Preservation, Destruction, Embodiment and Release. How significant is the unity of action that sways the gods with

every movement of the Dancer, and how dramatic the contrast of Raj Rajasvari's indifference. She is here Mula Prakriti, *Maya*, illusion, the desire of things phenomenal, gazing at Her own beauty in a glass, holding the noose that snares and the goad that drives, within the fiery circle of rebirth and death. Yet She is the co-equal of Siva, enthroned and glorified. (*).

NATARAJA (SIVA)

This magnificent South Indian Saiyite bronze, now in the Madras Museum, has often been figured and described. It is probably the finest of the many figures of the 'Dancing Lord' to be found in the museums (there are examples at Colombo,* Copenhagen, the Musee Guimet, South Kensington and elsewhere). The poise and movement make the figure an embodiment of rhythm, and the shapely limbs, especially the lifted leg, are peculiarly beautiful. Siva's dance has both an anecdotal and an esoteric interpretation. The former is as follows: "Siva appeared in disguise amongst a congregation of ten thousand sages, and in the course of disputation, confuted them and so angered them thereby, that they endeavoured by incantations to destroy Him. A fierce tiger was created in sacrificial flames, and rushed upon Him; but smiling gently, He seized it with His sacred hands, and with the nail of His little finger stripped off its skin, which He wrapped about Himself as if it had been a silken cloth. Undiscouraged by failure, the sages renewed their offerings, and there was produced a monstrous serpent, which He seized and wreathed about His neck. Then He began to dance; but there rushed upon Him a last monster in the shape of a hideous malignant dwarf. Upon him the God pressed the tip of His foot, and broke the creature's back, so that it writhed upon the ground; and so, His last foe prostrate, Siva resumed the dance of which the gods were witnesses. A modern interpretation of this legend explains that He wraps about Him, as a garment, the tiger fury of human passion; the guile and malice of mankind He wears as a necklace, and beneath His feet is for ever crushed the embodiment of evil." The esoteric signi-

*Published in the Burlington Magazine for May, 1910.

ficance of Siva's dance has been explained in the description of Plate II. Siva is thus one with that Eros Protogonos, Lord of Life and Death, of whom Lucian spoke when he said, "It would seem that dancing came into being at the beginning of all things, and was brought to light together with Eros, that ancient one for we see this primaeval dancing clearly set forth in the choral dance of the costellations, and in the planets and fixed stars, their interweaving and interchange and orderly harmony." Of concrete symbols associated with the dancing figure, the drum in one right hand signifies creative sound, the vibratory movement initiating evolution: the flame in one left hand signifies the converse activity, destruction, involution. The hand up-raised (in *abhaya mudra*) says to the worshipper, Fear not; and the other points to His Foot, the refuge of the soul. The Ganges (as a mermaid) and the crescent moon, which should appear in the streaming hair, are not distinguishable in the photograph. A cobra wreathes itself about His arm. Upon His brow blazes the third eye of spiritual wisdom. (47).

SIVA RATRI (SIVA'S NIGHT)
OR
SIVA PUJA (ADORATION OF SIVA)

Siva's Night is a fast day falling on the fourteenth day of Maga (February). For twenty-four hours the Saivite should abstain from food, drink and sleep. Puja (offerings of flowers, fruit and water) is offered to Siva every three hours of the day and night. If the picture does not actually stand for 'Siva Ratri', it is properly described, in any case, as Siva Puja, Adoration of Siva. The picture represents a Princess with two attendants making offerings at a mountain shrine at night. The linga, Siva's symbol, is seen on the right at the mouth of a little cave within which a light is burning. On to the linga falls a splashing stream of water from the rock, to form a rivulet that finally passes across the front of the picture, where its bank is lined with flowers and nodding sedges. This stream is the Ganges, that falls from heaven on to Siva's head, and thence to earth. Perhaps there is a further meaning in the picture. Just as the yogi in some Indian pictures stands for Siva himself, so here, the Princess adoring Siva may be Uma. There is a conscious air about the

mountain and the forest. Uma is daughter of the mountain, she is Parvati. The half-hidden moon, even though full, suggests the crescent moon on Siva's brow; perhaps this reveals to us more than any other detail the picture's mysterious charm — the whole landscape is the living garment of Siva himself. The linga is only a symbol, but He is everywhere. (47).

SIVA (GANGADHARA)

This majestic figure, in a temple in Tanjore, represents Siva as Gangadhara, 'He who bears the River,' a title which alludes to the birth of Ganges. It is said that when the Ganges fell from heaven, in response to the prayers of Bhagirathi, for the lustration of the ashes of the sixty thousand sons of Sagara, Siva caught its waters in His matted locks, lest their force should overwhelm the world; and indeed they wandered in His hair for ages before they reached the earth at all. There may be more in this story than appears upon the surface; yet, regarded as a myth, it seems to represent some vision of the mighty river's source amongst the forest-covered slopes of the Himalayas, where is situated Siva's paradise, the heavenly Kailasa. Perhaps the most noticeable thing about this figure is its wonderful repose and graciousness. In the two ears are earrings of different patterns. This symbolism, characteristic both of Mahayana Buddhist and Hindu images, indicates the double nature, male and female, of the Divine Life. (47).

GANESHA, JAVA

Ganesha or Ganapati, son of Siva and Parvati, is the god of wisdom, arts and sciences; he is always represented with an elephant's head, and seated. His relationship with Siva is shown by the crescent moon and skull in his head-dress and the third eye on his forehead. His attributes are a rosary, an axe, a piece of elephant tusk, and a dish from which he takes food with his trunk. He is essentially the Remover of Difficulties, invoked at the beginning of undertakings. His image is often placed over the doors of houses. He is easy to be approached, and is spoken of with affectionate familiarity. He is a god of success in

physical, intellectual and spiritual life. The concrete symbolism has been interpreted as follows: his restless trunk is for the enquiring mind; the combination of head and hand (trunk) are for the power of thought in action; his great stomach is that of one who digests all: his vehicle, a rat, shows his power of penetrating everywhere. The rosary is a sign of his relation to Siva in his ascetic aspect; the axe is the attribute of one who cuts his way through jungles (of opposition). (47).

DURGA

Durga is a form of Devi (Uma, Parvati, etc.) She is represented as the destroyer of evil, in the form of the demon Mahisha. In the example reproduced, she has eight arms, and stands on a kneeling buffalo, from whose neck the demon Mahishasura emerges in dwarf form. One hand holds the buffalo by the tail, another the demon by the hair; one bears a shield and others are broken away. Durga has a crescent moon and skull in the head-dress, as Sakti of Siva. She wears sarong and bodice with lotus ornament, and the usual jewellery. She is represented as a woman of amazonian proportions, in active movement. In the well developed torso and powerful build we find a feminine type differing widely from the more usual types of India, where the waist is constricted. (47).

Remembering how the gods are shaped by men in their own image, the various types of representation of Devi seem to throw much light on the earlier Indian conceptions of woman. Here she is the Amazon or Valkyrie; in the Prajnaparamita of Plate XVI. She is the embodiment of wisdom; in the Uma of Plate XXX. she is essentially 'feminine', though even here she is represented as expounding or teaching (perhaps explaining to Siva the duties of women, — Mahabharata); as Kali she is the 'Destroyer of Time.' (47).

A feature typical of Hindu theology is the conception of the Two-in-One — Purusa and Prakriti, Siva-Sakti Lakshmi-Narayana, etc. (42).

Associated with the Lord is his consort, "Energy" or "Power", known variously as Devi Sakti, Uma, Parvati, etc. These male and female principles are often represented iconographically side by side, or the Sakti may be conceived as part of the god's form. In the same way every Hindu deity has a feminine counterpart or active power; Vishnu for example, being associated with Lakshmi, Krishna with Radha and so on. (39).

FIGURE OF A TAMIL SAINT

I have called this colossal sculpture a Tamil saint, because it is evidently not the figure of a king,* though commonly called the statue of Parakrama Bahu the Great. It stands overlooking the great Topawewa tank at Polonnaruwa, and may well be of the time of Parakrama Bahu, though not a portrait of himself. Can it possibly represent the Saivite saint Manikka Vacagar? However it be identified, it is certain that we have here a very noble work. Very simply clad, the great sage stands easily, as it were, against the rock of which the figure is still a part, reading from a palm leaf manuscript. Of Indian sculpture representing a human being, it would be hard to find an example excelling this in pure grandeur. It has an architectural or monumental quality that is most impressive, and entirely appropriate to the scale of execution. Probably of the twelfth century. Polonnaruwa, Ceylon. (47).

SUNDARA MURTI SWAMI

The story of Sundara Murti Swami, one of the four great Tamil Saivite hymn writers (fl. about 700 A.D.) is briefly as follows:

Born at Tirunavalur in the Madras presidency, he was adopted by the king, but brought up as a learned Brahman. When he grew older, a suitable marriage was arranged. Arrayed in bridal attire, he rode out to

*This is shown by the absence of jewellery, the simple dress, and the matted locks. There is no reason to suppose that Parakrama Bahu ever became, like Asoka, a monk.

the marriage. Then Siva, "though He has neither form nor city nor name, yet for the sake of saving human souls, took shape and name as an aged Brahman and came from Kailas to bar the way." Holding up a piece of written palm leaf. He claimed the boy as a family slave. A quarrel ensued, and the boy tore up the bond in anger, calling the old man mad. But this was only a copy of the original. Finally it was agreed that the original should be submitted to a committee of Brahmans for inspection. It was found to be in the boy's grandfather's writing, and to bind himself and his descendants as slaves to the old man for ever. Witnesses present had to admit their signature. It was agreed that the marriage must be stopped, and the boy must follow the old man as a slave. But where did He live? "Follow Me," said He. The boy did so, and He led the way into a Saiva temple and there disappeared. Then, appearing to the boy in a vision as Siva, with Parvati and Nandi, He claimed him as His devotee of old. Sundara Murti Swami worshipped the Lord with tears of bliss, feeling himself "like a rootless tree." Siva said: "My favourite worship is the singing of hymns; sing Tamil hymns now." The boy said he knew not how. "As you just now called Me madman," said the Lord, "so let that be My name, and sing." So he sang the first hymn, of which the first verse runs:

○ Madman, Wearer of the crescent moon, Lord and gracious One,
How comes it that I ever think on Thee, my heart remembering
Thee always?

Thou hast placed the Veenai river on the south!
O Father dwelling in the fair city of Vennai Nallur.
Since I am Thy slave, how may I deny it?



The bronze represents the boy saint, in bridal dress, at that moment of illumination when he realised Whose were the bonds that bound him. It is a visible embodiment of the idea of bhakti, passionate adoration, that plays so large a part in Southern Saivism. The figure has a wonderful quality of breathlessness that distinguishes it amongst all Indian sculpture. Probably of the eleventh or twelfth century. Height of original 24¾ inches. From Polonnaruva; in the Colombo Museum. (47).

PATTINI DEVI. *

This beautiful bronze, nearly life size, was presented by Sir G. Brownrigg to the British Museum in 1830, and is said to come from "North-East Ceylon, between Trincomalee and Batticaloa." In the absence of other evidence, the identification as Patiala or Pattini Devi may be provisionally accepted. The twelfth or thirteenth century is probably the latest date to which the work can be assigned. The seriousness of expression and the beautiful modelling of the upper part of the bust are very noteworthy. Very beautiful too is the treatment of the thin, clinging drapery. The slenderness of waist is, however, carried to an extreme point, and, to modern eyes, somewhat mars the beauty of the figure. It is rather curious to reflect that we in modern times, who pinch our waists and feet in fact, do not accept exaggerated slenderness as an ideal; while in India constriction never was a fact, though very generally an ideal. Height 57½ inches. From Ceylon; in the British Museum. (47).

*Pattini (who in a broader sense may be regarded as a form of Devi) is a goddess of chastity, whose worship is said to have been introduced into Ceylon from Southern India by Gajabahu in the second century A.D.



THE HINDU BRONZES

The Saiva bronzes of Polonnaruva are in all respects very different from the old Buddhist works. They have been cast in Ceylon, but as a group they belong to the prolific South-Indian school of mediaeval bronzes represented by the Madras Natarajas and the Tanjore Siva.+ The subjects include Siva and Parvati, with Nandi, images of Saiva saints, the Sun-god, and one or two figures of Krishna. They probably mark one of the periods of Tamil occupation of Polonnaruva, though the possibility is by no means excluded that Siva Devalas flourished contemporaneously with the Buddhist viharas without conflict. The most striking forms are those of the Natarajas, of which the example illustrated here in figs. 1 and 4 is unusually perfectly preserved. Siva is here represented as Cosmic Dancer. He is four-armed, and has flowery-braided locks ending in tight curls, and whirling in the dance. On the proper right side, in the flying hair, is a figure of Ganga (represented as a nagini), on the left a cobra and the crescent moon. The head-dress contains a skull and terminates in a fan of Cassia leaves; a pearl fillet encircles the forehead; a man's earring is worn on the proper side, a woman's on the left. Of the four hands the rear right holds a drum (udukkai), the rear left a flame in a dish; the front right is in abhaya mudra ('do not fear'), the front left hand points to the lifted foot. Amongst the many ornaments are small bells tied round the calf of the leg, as morris-dancers wear them. The whole figure is enclosed in a fiery arch (tiruvasi), arising from the mouths of a pair of addorsed makaras, established on a lotus pedestal (padmasana). A legend is told in explanation of this dance (in the *Periya Puranam*), as follows: In the forest of Taragam there dwelt multitudes of heretical rishis, followers of the Himamsa. Siva proceeded there to confute them, accompanied by Visnu disguised as a beautiful woman, and by Visnu's servant Ati-Sesan, the naga Ananta. The rishis were at first led to dispute amongst themselves, but their anger was soon directed against Siva, and they endeavoured to destroy Him by means of incantations. A fierce tiger was produced in the magic fires, and rushed upon Him; but he seized it in his hands, and stripped off its

+ Visvakarma, Pl. 28.

skin with the nail of his little finger, and wrapped it himself about as a garment. The sages renewed their offerings, and produced a monstrous serpent, which Siva took in his hands and wreathed about his neck like a garland. Then He began to dance; but there rushed upon Him a last monster in the shape of a malignant dwarf, *Muyalaka*. Upon him the God pressed the tip of his foot, and broke the creature's back, so that it writhed upon the ground; then He resumed the dance, beheld of gods and rishis. On this occasion *Ati-Sesan* obtained the boon to behold the dance again in *Tillai*, sacred *Chitambaram* — the centre of the Universe (that is, as we shall see below, in one's own heart).

More significant than the details of this legend, are the interpretations constantly referred to in the *Saiva* hymns. The dance, called *Nadanta*, represents the movement of energy within the universe: it is Siva's 'Five-Activities', Creation, Preservation, Destruction, Embodiment, and Release. The drum is for Creation (through sound, which, for the Hindus, has always a moulding force on the material environment), the flame for Destruction (by Fire). The dwarf is Illusion, Plural Perception, the fetters of Time, Space and Casuality, the sense of Egoity, in general, *avidya*.¹ The flaming *tiruvasi* circle represents awakened matter (Nature), vibrant in response to the informing energy which touches its bounds above and below and on either side. The whole conception further implies the well-known myth of the days and nights of Brahma — reconciliation of time and eternity by repeated phase-alternations of manifestation and withdrawal.² The *Sakti* of Siva is the Mother of the Universe, as He its father: She is at once his Energy and Grace. 'Let me set upon my head,' says *St. Arunandi*, 'the gracious feet of this Our Mother, who cuts the fetters of rebirth and is seated with Our Father in the hearts of the Freed.' It is only through and with

¹ It should be observed, at the same time, that the trampled figures of Indian sculpture have usually the same attributes as the God, and thus appear to represent rather Time-bound phases (*amsa*) of the God, than anything like a devil. In no case can the dwarf figure be identified with *Yama*.

² For more detailed discussion see *Siddhanta Dipika*, xiii. 1 (July 1912).

Sakti, who is part of himself, indeed, that Siva operates in the universe; Siva and Sakti are the sun and its radiance. Next to the figures of Siva and Parvati come those of the Saiva saints, of whom the Polonnaruva series affords examples unique in craftsmanship and variety. The actual figures must be associated in date with those of the god, but will be considered here in the order of date of the saints they represent. The four chief Tamil saints and psalmists are Manikka Vacagar, Tiru-jnana-sambandha Svami, Appar Svami and Sundara Murti Svami, all four being represented amongst the Polonnaruva bronzes. Manikka Vacagar was the Prime Minister of a king of Madura, and lived about 100 A.D.³ at any rate, not later than the 4th century.⁴ The chief events in his life were the call to apostleship, when he abandoned the life of a citizen, and the subsequent composition of the spiritual hymns called collectively the Tiruvacagam. In the bronze shown in fig. 19 he is represented as reciting from a palm-leaf manuscript of his songs.

Tiru-jnana-sambandha Svami is, next to Manikka Vacagar, the most popular of the Tamil rishis. 'There is scarcely a Saiva temple in the Tamil country where his image is not daily worshipped.'¹ At the age of three, while his father was bathing, he was left alone on the ghat (at Shikali, in the Tanjore district); in response to his cry, the goddess of the place appeared and gave him a cup of her own milk. When the father returned, the baby pointed to the direction in which the goddess had vanished, and uttered a hymn, which now stands first in the great collection called *Devaram*. He became a wandering preacher, and a great opponent of the Buddhists; he re-established the Saiva faith in Madura. On the day of his wedding, he, with his bride and all the guests, was translated bodily to heaven. Opinions about his date have varied widely; there is little doubt that he lived a century or two later than Manikka Vacagar, and not later than the beginning of the 7th century A.D.² Tiru-

³p. Arunachalam, loc. cit.

⁴K.G. Sessa Aiyar, *Tamilian Antiquary*, No. 4 p. 54, endorsed by the Rev. G.U. Pope, who had previously suggested the 7th or 8th century.

¹Sundaram Pillai, *Tamilian Antiquary*, No. 3, p. 4.

²Sundaram Pillai, loc. cit., p. 60; Mr. Arunachalam says about 500 A.D.

jnana-sambandha Svami is represented amongst the Polonnaruva bronzes by the image illustrated in Fig. 20, as a child, holding in his hands the castanets which were given to him by Siva himself. There exists, however, a much finer example in the collection of Lord Ampthill.³ Appar Svami, or Tiru-na-vukkarasu was the elder contemporary of Tiru-jnana-sambandha, and a convert from Buddhism. He was accustomed to wander from temple to temple, performing the humble service of weeding the courtyards. In the two images from Polonnaruva (figs. 21, 22), he is represented in an attitude of devotion, holding the hoe with which he was accustomed to remove the weeds. This identification is at any rate certain for fig. 22, if perhaps a little doubtful in the case of fig. 21. The fourth of the great Tamil psalmists is Sundara Murti Svami, represented amongst the Polonnaruva bronzes by the two images illustrated in figs. 15, 16, and 17. His date is about the 8th century; his birth-place Tiruvarur, near Negapatam. His story is as follows: On the occasion of his marriage, Siva, 'though He has neither form, nor city, nor name, yet for sake of saving human souls, took name and form as an aged Brahman, and came from Kailas to bar the way' of the wedding procession. Holding up a piece of written palm-leaf, he claimed the boy as a family slave. The document proved to be a copy of an original in the hand-writing of the boy's grandfather, binding himself and his descendants for ever. It was agreed that the marriage must be stopped, and the boy must follow the Brahman as his slave. 'Follow me', He said, and led the way to a Saiva temple, and there disappeared. Then He appeared in a glorious vision, accompanied by Parvati and Nandi, and Sundara Murti Svami, as he was afterwards known, feeling like a 'rootless tree', worshipped his master in ecstasy, and in obedience to the Lord's command, composed his first hymn. In images, Sundara Murti Svami is represented as a youth in bridal dress, at the moment of his illumination, when he realised Whose were the bonds that bound him. The best of the two images here illustrated (figs. 15, 16) has a touching quality of suddenly arrested movement and breathless wonder, and is one of the most remarkable works of all Indian art.

³ Illustrated in Pl. IV of 'Eleven Plates' (of Indian Sculpture).

One other figure (fig. 18) of a saint offering flowers, most probably represents Chandesvara, a young Brahman cowherd and devotee of Siva, whose story is related in the Periya Puranam (vol. i, pp. 512-38); or possibly Vyaghrapada, a Brahman boy-devotee of Siva, the Patron saint of Tiger-Town (Tiru-puli-ur), who spent his days in offering the most beautiful flowers to Siva, and was given six eyes and the feet of a tiger to enable him to find more and more perfect flowers to offer. Vyaghrapada's story is related in the Koyil Puranam. These saints are much older than the apostles and psalmists above spoken of. The inscription, in a mixed Sinhalese and Grantha dialect, reads . . . pati rsabha vainse, the first letter being undecipherable: the whole constitutes an honorific title. In another series of images (figs. 42, 43, 171, 184), from not very definitely specified localities in Ceylon, we have remains of the cult of Pattini. Pattini is a South Indian goddess, representing the apotheosis of Kannaki, wife of Kovilan or Palanga, a goldsmith unjustly accused of stealing the anklet of the Queen of Madura. She was subsequently canonized, and is regarded as a manifestation of Sakti; her special attributes are the jewelled anklets and the mango. She is a goddess of chastity, and controller of diseases such as small-pox, measles, and cattle murrain. According to the Sinhalese Rajavaliya and current tradition, Gaja Baha (2nd century A.D.), in the course of his successful invasion of Southern India, brought away the sacred anklets from Madura and established the worship of the goddess in Ceylon, where she has remained to this day the central figure of an elaborate and varied cult, which includes the national game of ankeliya and the rites of fire-walking. Another Hindu divinity of great importance in Ceylon is Kataragama Deviyo, or Karttikeyya, who is to be identified with Skanda Kumara, the son of Siva and god of war. His shrine at Kataragama in the South Central Province is still the scene of an important annual pilgrimage. In fig. 34, Kattaragama Deviyo is represented, as Karttikeyya in India, with six heads and twelve arms, but the arrangement of the heads and arms is awkward and unusual. Finally, we have to refer to the fine image of Hanuman now in the Indian Museum at South Kensington, to which it was presented by the late William Morris. In age this may be associated with the bronzes from

Polonnaruva (10th-13th century). I know no representation of the monkey-god more impressive than this, or more pathetic in its combination of human or divine intelligence and affection, with an animal nature. (47).

BOROBUDUR

The rich and gracious forms of these reliefs, which if placed end to end would extend for over five kilometres, bespeak an infinitely luxurious rather than a profoundly spiritual or energised experience. There is here no nervous tension, no concentration of force to be compared with that which so impresses the observer at Angkor Wat. Borobudur is like a ripe fruit matured in breathless air; the fulness of its forms is an expression of static wealth, rather than the volume that denotes the outward radiation of power. The Sumatran empire was now in the very height of its glory, and in intimate contact with the whole of the then civilized world; in the last analysis Borobudur is a monument of Sailendra culture, rather than that of Buddhist devotion. (2).

SRI RAMAKRISHNA

Nothing, perhaps, so strangely impresses or bewilders a Christian student of Saint Ramakrishna's life as the fact that this Hindu of Hindus, without in any way repudiating his Hinduism, but for the moment forgetting it, about 1866 completely surrendered himself to the Islamic way, repeated the name of Allah, wore the costume and ate the food of a Mussalman. This self-surrender to what we should call in India the waters of another current of the single river of truth resulted only in a direct experience of the beatific vision, not less authentic than before. Seven years later Ramakrishna in the same way proved experimentally the truth of Christianity. He was now for a time completely absorbed in the idea of Christ, and had not room for any other thought. You might have supposed him to be a convert. What really resulted was that he could now confirm on the basis of personal experience, "I have also practised all religions, Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, and I have

also followed the paths of the different Hindu sects. — The lake has many shores. At one the Hindu draws water with a pitcher, and calls it *jala*, at another the Mussalman in leather bottles, and calls it *pani*, at a third the Christian finds what he calls 'water'." (34).

SRI RAMANA MAHARISHI

I have the highest respect for Ramana Maharishi and I think he ranks with Sri Ramakrishna. I should think it a great privilege to take the dust of his feet. (50).

SISTER NIVEDITA

Sister Nivedita, a most sincere disciple of Swami Vivekananda, who was himself a follower of the great Ramakrishna, brought to the study of Indian life and culture a sound knowledge of Western educational and social science, and an unsurpassed enthusiasm of devotion to the peoples and the ideals of the adopted country. Her chief works are "*The Web of Indian Life*," almost the only fair account of Hindu society written in English, and "*Kali the Mother*", where also for the first time the profound tenderness and terror of the Indian Mother-cult are presented to Western readers in such a manner as to reveal its true religious and social significance. Through these books Nivedita became more merely an interpreter of India to Europe, but ever more, the inspiration of a new race of Indian students, no longer anxious to be Anglicized, but convinced that all real progress, as distinct from mere political controversy, must be based on national ideals, upon intentions already clearly expressed in religion and art. (29).

MAHATMA GANDHI

To call a man Mahatma is to say that he has been liberated in this life (*jivan mukta*, corresponding to the Buddhist *drste dharme vimukta*) or in some life . . . (12).

I have the highest respect for Mahatma Gandhi's work in this field. By his advocacy of Satyagraha he reminded India of her most ancient ideals and is not only a teacher for India but a *Jagat Guru*. But non-violence as he also knows, is not merely a matter of refraining from visibly violent actions; it is a matter of making peace with ourselves, one of learning to obey our inner man, for none but the outer man or ego is aggressive. (19).

Gandhi, despite all his errors, is the man of the age — our age. Gandhi is great because he has dared to speak of non-violence in a time of violence, of peace and brotherhood in a time of degradation and human destruction. He has spoken of man's highest inner quality, and though we, who are of limited vision, cannot expect to follow him we cannot refrain from admiring and even worshipping him — a man who is showing us a way which cannot be followed until mankind is tamed. (18).

It will not be overlooked that Mahatma Gandhi himself, so well known as a champion of the "untouchables," does not wish to do away with caste (71).

We in the West want Gandhi's India and no other. Don't think that imitating us in the West, monkey do as monkey see, you are doing anything but monkey tricks. The greatest tribute I can pay the Mahatma is that he is the only unpurchasable man in the world. (18).

It is only with the surviving, the 'superstitious' East, Gandhi's East, the one that has never attempted to live by bread alone — that the West can co-operate. (17).

Mahatma Gandhi, universally regarded as a great spiritual force in the world, would like to resolve the untouchables' problem, but still believes in the theory of the caste system. To do away with caste, to reduce all men to the condition of the modern proletarians who have no vocations but only "jobs" would not be a solution, but much rather a dissolution. (17).

Our object in the present article has been to explain the word "Mahatma" historically. The name has been given to Gandhiji by common consent, perhaps in the general sense of the 'Saint'. There can be no doubt that in some of its connotations, that of selflessness (with a higher sense than that of a mere unselfishness) for example, it can be properly applied to him. But we have not had in mind to discuss the applicability of the term in its full meaning to any individual: for that must ever remain secrecy between himself and God. (12).

Thought it worthwhile to call attention to a remarkable continuity of the Indian tradition in thinking of God as truth; a tendency from the Rig Veda to Gandhi. (56).

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

It would be difficult to exaggerate the significance for Indian nationalism, of such heroic figures as that of Rabindranath Tagore, the Bengali poet, dramatist and musical composer: 'for nations are destroyed or flourish in proportion as their poetry, painting and music are destroyed or flourish'. The work of Rabindranath is essentially Indian in sentiment and form. It is at the same time modern. (4).

Vaishnava art is correspondingly humanistic, and it is from this school of thought that the poetry of Rabindranath Tagore derives. In it are echoed the teachings of such prophets as Sri Chaitanya, and poets such as Jayadev and Chandidas, who sang of the Religion of Love. (4).

Through all Rabindranath's songs there runs an undertone of sadness: this must always be so in the work of serious men. This sadness is not a gloom, but rather a secret joy, that perceives with unfaltering vision the splendid pageant of life, but looks upon death as an adventure awaiting no less glorious achievement. (4)

The poet gives no descriptive titles to his pictures how could he? They are not pictures about things, but pictures about himself. In this sense they are probably much nearer to his music than to his poetry. In the poetry; so far at least as the context is concerned, he is primarily the sensitive exponent of a racial or rational tradition, not an inventor, and therefore his words are more profoundly sanctioned and more

significant than those of any private genius could be; all India speaks and understands the same language. The poetry reveals nothing of the poet's personality, though it establishes his status. But the painting is an intimacy comparable to the publication of private correspondence. What a varied and colourful person is revealed! (34).

The Poet's art is childlike but not childish (34).

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

Nehru is the man of the moment because we have been caught unawares and unprepared, and he speaks a language the West understands. (18).

Zetland, in the *Legacy of India*, laments that after a hundred and fifty years of British rule in India "it comes as something of a shock to discover how little has been added during that time to the legacy of India in the (cultural) sense in which the word is here employed." Nehru, our Foreign Minister, has had to admit that, "I am a queer mixture of East and West, out of place everywhere, at home nowhere"; Jinnah knows little or nothing of Islam; theirs was an "Anglo-Indian" education. (38).

NANDALAL BOSE

Nandalal is the ideal *guru*. Perhaps the man in him is even greater than the Artist. It is an education itself to know him as well as a great pleasure. In his everyday life, he is simple even as an ordinary villager. The coarsest *khaddar* clothes him. (59).

Mr. Nandalal Bose is already well known as one of the most brilliant of the still too small of Indian painters who following Mr. Tagore's lead, have shown that the Indian creative interest is still a living power, and that there is a deeper meaning in Indian nationalism than a mere demand for rights. (60).

UDAY SHANKAR

Now what has Shankar done? Much of Shankar's training has been European, and he is much more individually the "artist" in a modern sense than is the Indian virtuoso whose art is one of fixed ends and ascertained means of operation, not to be arbitrarily modified in accordance with any personal taste. One of Shankar's assistants has been a European; though qualified by a remarkable adaptability. But if Shankar's performances are not just what could still be seen in India, neither would it be fair to say that his art is not authentically Indian dancing or acting. Shankar is after all an Indian, and a man of artistic integrity. His training in Europe represents only a part of his resources; he has studied obediently and patiently as the disciple (we use the word advisedly) of Indian professionals, and has assimilated rather than merely observed. In recent years he has studied with particular devotion the dramatic practice of Southern India, particularly in Malabar, where the art of the Kathakalis, of which an account was recently published in the *Illustrated London News*, has preserved better than anywhere else both the technique and the quality of the ancient drama. He uses an Indian technique to give expression to Indian themes, derived as in India from the inexhaustible material of the Epics, which are really Myths. He has brought with him groups of hereditary musicians, and enabled Americans to hear the instrumental music of India for the first time. Bearing in mind that Indian acting, dancing, and music are performed under conditions of patronage more like those under which European chamber music has developed than like those of the modern commercial stage, one may say that he has brought the Indian theatre to America as sincerely and as really as was perhaps at all possible; and that he deserves all the credit for this, and all the appreciation, that he has received. (65).

VIDYAPATI

Vidyapati's position as a poet and maker of language is analogous to that of Dante in Italy and Chaucer in England. He did not disdain to use the folk-speech and folk-thought for expression of the highest

matters. Just as Dante was blamed by the classical scholars in Italy so Vidyapati was blamed by pundits . . . Vidyapati's Vaishnava *padas* are at once folk and cultivated art — just like the finest of Pahari paintings where every episode of which he sings finds exquisite expression. (*).

RAVI VARMA

It has indeed been Ravi Varma's reward for choosing Indian subjects, that he has been to some degree a true nationalising influence; but had he been also a true artist with the gift of great imagination, this influence must have been tenfold deeper and greater. He is the landmark of a great opportunity, not perhaps wholly missed, but ill availed of; melodramatic conceptions, want of restraint, anecdotal aims and a lack of Indian feeling in the treatment of sacred and epic subjects are his faults. His art is not truly national — he merely plays with local colour. His gods and heroes are men cast in a very common mould, who find themselves in situations for which they lack a proper dignity. The resulting degradation of what should be heroic and ideal types is quite unpardonable. Ravi Varma's pictures, in a word, are not national art: they are such as any European student could paint, after only a superficial study of Indian life and literature. A reaction from these ideals is represented by what has been called the New School of Indian Painting founded by Abanindranath Tagore. (*).

Theatrical conception, want of imagination and lack of Indian feeling in the treatment of sacred and epic Indian subjects, are Ravi Varma's fatal faults. No offence can be greater than the treatment of the serious or epic subjects without dignity, and Ravi Varma's gods and heroes are men cast in a very common mould, who find themselves in situations for which they have not a proper capacity . . . His pictures are such as any European student could paint after perusal of the necessary literature and a superficial study of Indian life. (*).

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL

Thirty years ago my father was the leading Tamil in Ceylon, and it will recur to most of you that he himself had become exceedingly westernised. At that time it was necessary both that we should in some measure adapt ourselves to a changed environment and also prove ourselves capable of equalling the attainments of western men on their own lines. Had he lived, I cannot doubt that (like my cousins, Messrs. Arunachalam and Ramanathan, who also at one time trod the same path) he would have seen that we were liable to overshoot the mark and he would have been the first to preserve and protect the national ideals and eastern traditions, with which our lives and those of our forefathers are inextricably bound up. It is therefore fitting that his son should carry on such work. Of my mother I may say that it was her hope that her marriage with my father would contribute to a better understanding and sympathy between English and Tamils for whom she felt great admiration and affection and I may say I am now working for a cause which has her fullest sympathy. (43).

When I came to Ceylon for the third time, nearly four years ago, I was still to all intents and purposes an Englishman, but while I have not lost nothing of my affection for English literature and art, I have been reborn as a child of India, and have in some measure returned to the ancestral home as a child to its parents. (43).

I was not bred on Indian soil, yet now when I go about my friends in India, I often find they quarrel with me because I am much too Indian in my ways of thinking for their anglicised tastes. (*).

When I survey the life of India during the last 3,000 years and bear in mind her literature, traditions and ideals, the searchings of her philosophers, and the work of her artists, the music of her sons and daughters, and the nobility of the religion they have evolved, and when from these elements I form in my mind a picture of an ideal India and an ideal earthly life, I confess it is difficult for me to imagine a more powerful source of inspiration, a deeper well of truth to draw upon. (43).

At this time I should like to emphasize that I have never built up a philosophy of my own or wished to establish a new school of thought. Perhaps the greatest thing I have learnt is never to think for myself; I fully agree with Andre Gide that "Toutes choses sont dites deja", and what I have sought is to understand what has been said, while taking no account of the "inferior philosophers." Holding with Heraclitus that the WORD is common to all, and that wisdom is to know the WILL whereby all things are steered, I am convinced with Jeremias that the human cultures in all their apparent diversity are but dialects of one and the same language of the SPIRIT that there is a "common universe of discourse transcending the differences of tongues." (11).

By the way, if you must say something, do not try to white-wash me. I have lived in very confused times, I have played the game as thoroughly and completely as necessity demanded. I have tried to take the pleasure and the pain, what the world approves and disapproves with equilibrium. Where is the man who has not made mistakes? To have lived in any other way would have been to evade the issue — had this not been required of me it would not have happened. — I am not a Victorian. By meeting the conflict one comes to know the better from the worse and learns to discriminate. These indeed are times of transition when the very contraries of which the walls of the universe are made cease to be good and evil — for we 'modern' Europeans are always pitching two evils, one against the other. (74).

Every man holds dear his Homeland. As for me, my love for India is my destiny. I feel for her what a child feels towards her parents. (*)

Look at this house. I don't have a radio because I can't stand one. The longer I have lived in the United States the more Indian I have become and therefore I shall be happy when I settle down in India. (18).

More than half of my active life has been spent in Boston. (11).

If I were not getting solid food out of scholarship, I would drop it tomorrow, and spend my days fishing and gardening! (20).

As the only speaker here not "from within the Anglo-Saxon tradition" I have been asked to "participate as a critic of Western ideas and attitudes" and I mean to do just that. But I also claim to be a representative of both the cultures I inherit, and I hope it will not be thought that the critical function to which I am committed reflects any merely intransigent attitude on my part; and I think it may be fair to myself, and to others present, to say that I am in fact almost as much of a Platonist and Mediaevalist as I am an Orientalist, and that in writing on cultural relations my work has always been directed towards an exposition of the common metaphysical tradition that underlies both cultures, European and Asiatic, and to showing that their differences, however, great are accidental rather than essential, and of comparatively modern origin, and so not necessarily insurmountable; although I would agree that to bring about a really mutual understanding much good will and even more good work, intellectual rather than moral, may be needed. (10).

As for myself I will only say that no day passes in which I do not read the Scriptures and the works of the great philosophers of all ages so far as they are accessible to me in modern languages and in Latin, Greek and Sanskrit. I am wholly convinced that there is one truth that shines through them all in many shapes, a truth greater in glory by far than can be circumscribed by any creed or confined by the walls of any church or temple. (11).

I want to serve not merely India but humanity and to be as absolutely universal as possible — like the Avalokiteswara. (45).

My business is to do His business. Remember, 'There is nothing in the three worlds, that should be done by Me, nor anything unattainable that might be attained; yet I mingle in action'. (Bhagavad Gita, III, 22). (74).

My wife and I are returning to live in Northern India for the rest of our lives. This will be by the end of 1948. We mean to live in

retirement. I shall not take part in any public functions or affairs whatever but individuals who wish to do so will be free to visit us. (19).

I have used the tools of the present age, that is my scientific training, which I took seriously, to be used without a bias. My life, my work and my understanding follow a sequence and are predominantly logical. (50).

I am not a reformer or a propagandist. I don't think for myself...I am not putting forward any new or private doctrines or interpretations... I spend my time trying to understand some things that I regard as immutable truths; in the first place, for my own sake, and secondly for that of those who can make use of my results. For me, there are certain axioms, principles, or values beyond question; my interest is not in thinking up new ones, but in the application of those that are. (*).

I, too, have a vocation, which is much rather one of research in the field of the significance of the universal symbols of the *Philosophia Perennis* than one of apology for or polemic on behalf of doctrines that must be believed if they are to be understood, and must be understood if they are to be believed. (71).

To be President of the United States is not in my power, nor would it give me any pleasure; on the other hand, I am one of the few whose work is their delight, I am contented and having this experience, I say that any civilization stands self-condemned in which men have to earn their living in any other way than by doing what they would rather be doing than anything else in the world. (17).

I have never placed nationalism above religion. (19).

Ananda means 'beatitude' (72).

I am proud of a nation whose flag is not nationalistic but points to man's relationship with the cosmos.

— *Indian Independence Day, Flag hoisting ceremony, August 15, 1947.*

Twice in my life I have met a Roman Catholic who could freely admit that for a Hindu to become a professing Christian was not essential to salvation (40).

You are entirely at liberty to quote any words of mine. My assurance is that a property in ideas is impossible, and you will find on the back of title page of my book, *Why Exhibit Works of Art?* (1943) the words: "This book has not been copyrighted; quotations long or short, may be made without express permission", In most cases, however, the publisher's permission is also to be asked, and I am sure it would readily be granted (71).

I am grateful to you for reading my books. Their contents are not "mine" so I have no hesitation as to their value in that respect, but on the other hand I am well aware of their deficiencies in exposition, at least in parts (72).

The *Bhagavad Gita* in commending the caste system also speaks of the worker's "delight" in his work; the word employed, *abhi-rata* (*ram* with an intensifying prefix), might as well have been rendered by "being in love with," carpenters and painters who regarded themselves as descendants of the archetypal All-worker (whose image they drew for me). At one time they were working for me at my own house, chiefly at the making of a painted chest for my own use.¹ They were to be paid at a day rate when the work was done; but far from trying to spin out the time, they were so much interested, so much involved in their work, that they insisted on being supplied with adequate light, so that they could go on working after dark.² There is your answer to the problem of overtime.³ It is under these conditions, as Plato says, that "more will be done, and better done, and more easily than in any other way."

¹ Now in the Colombo Museum.

² I once cited these facts in the course of a lecture given at one of our larger woman's colleges. I was informed that most of my audience found it almost incredible that men could thus ignore their own best economic interests; they could not imagine a willingness to work, unless for money.

³ For those whose means of livelihood is also their natural vocation, the word has no meaning; their work is never done. (41)

FINALE

I should like to point out that "art" is like "God," precisely in this respect, that it cannot be seen; all that we can see is *things made by art*, and hence properly called artifacts, and these are analogous to those effects, which are all that we can see of God. The art remains in the artist, regardless of the vicissitudes to which his works are subject; and I protest against the serious use of the term "art" by a writer who really means "works of art." (66)

Things made by art answer to human needs, or else are luxuries. Human needs are the needs of the whole man, who does not live by bread alone. That means that to tolerate insignificant, i.e., meaningless conveniences, however convenient they may be, is beneath our natural dignity; the whole man needs things well and truly made to serve at one and the same time the needs of the active and contemplative life. On the other hand, pleasure taken in things well made is not a need in us independent of our need for the things themselves. But a part of our very nature; pleasure perfects the operation, but is not its end; the purposes of art are wholly utilitarian, in the full sense of the word as it applies to the whole man. We cannot give the name of art to anything irrational. (73)

In an organized society it is every man's first duty to practise his own vocation; which inasmuch as vocation corresponds to nature, it is also his means of working out his own salvation; man's first duty socially thus coinciding with his first duty from the religious point of view (77).

We do not sufficiently realise that the 'civilisation' that men are supposed to be fighting for is already a museum piece (77).



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55. The Deeper Meaning Of The Struggle;
56. Letter to John Clark

Archer; 57. The Bugbear of Literacy; 58. Why Exhibit Works of Art?; 59. *India* (1936); 60. *The Modern Review* (1909); 61. Note by A.K.C. in Family Collection; 62. Letter to James Marshall Plumer; 63. Letter to Stanley Nott; 64. *The Indian Review* (1909); 65. *The Magazine of Art* (1937); 66. The Artist's Responsibility; 67. Letter to Rene Guernon; 68. Yakshas; 69. A New Approach to the Vedas; 70. Letter to B.S. Sitholey; 71. Letter to Jean David; 72. Letter to Howard Hollis; 73. Foreword to Prospectus of the College of Notre Dame Workshop; 74. Some Recollections and References to Ananda Coomaraswamy – Dona Luisa Coomaraswamy; 75. *Hindustan Review* (1914); 76. Eastern Religions and Western Thought. 77. The Artist's Responsibility.

41. The Bugbear of Democracy, Freedom and Equality

Characteristically Coomaraswamy renounced any claim to 'copyright' in his writing, for what he sought to convey, he said, was not personal, but inherited and universal.

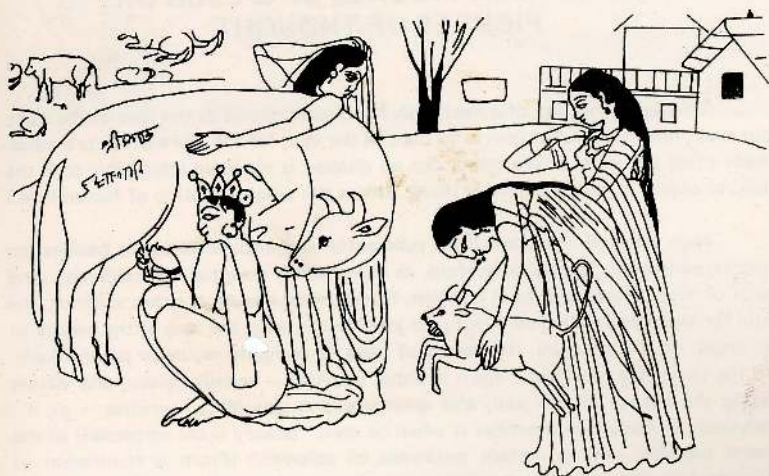
– Thomas Derrick

Let it be noted at the outset Coomaraswamy cannot be lumped with those Swamis East and West, or like types, who peddle a bogus "spirituality" that is vague, delusory, and deceitful. I believe further that Coomaraswamy had no designs on using the West except to return us to the sources of our own wisdom.

– Ray Livingston



GEMS FROM THE DANCE OF SIVA



KRISHNA MILKING. RAJPUT, PAHARI, GARHWAL, EIGHTEENTH CENTURY
Collection of the Author - A.K.C.

Amongst the greatest of the names of Siva is Nataraja, Lord of Dancers or King of Actors.

To appreciate any art, moreover, we ought not to concentrate upon its peculiarities — ethical or formal — but should endeavour to *take for granted* whatever the artist takes for granted.

Music has been a cultivated art in India for at least three thousand years.

Anonymity is thus in accordance with the truth; and it is one of the proudest distinctions of Indian culture.

The Oriental woman, perhaps is not Oriental at all but simply woman.

The first expression of national idealism is then a rehabilitation of the past.

The 'will to govern' must not be confused with the 'will to power'.

She who refuses to live when her husband is dead is called Sati.

The beauty and logic of Indian life belong to a dying past; the nineteenth century has degraded much and created nothing.

GEMS FROM FIGURES OF SPEECH OR FIGURES OF THOUGHT

The representation of a man must really correspond to the idea of the man, but must not look so like him as to deceive the eye; for the work of art is a mind-made thing and aims at the mind, but an illusion is no more *intelligible* than the natural object it mimics. (That, I think, settles the whole question of Naturalism.)

Now because there are both substantial and accidental forms besides the uncreated Beauty, beauty is twofold, as being either essential or accidental. And each of these beauties is again twofold. For essential beauty is either spiritual, the soul for example an ethereal beauty, or intellectual, as in the case of the beauty of an angel; or it is physical, the beauty of material being its nature or natural form. In the same way, accidental form is either spiritual — science, grace, and virtues being the beauty of the soul, and ignorance and sins its deformities — or it is physical, as Augustine describes it when he says, "Beauty is the agreement of the parts together with a certain sweetness of colour". (From a translation of Ulrich of Strasburg *On Beauty*; there is another translation from St Thomas.)

To the "primitive" man who, like the angels, had fewer ideas and used less means than we, it had been inconceivable that anything, whether natural or artificial, could have a use or value only and not also a meaning; this man literally could not have understood our distinction of sacred from profane or of spiritual from material values; he did not live by bread alone. It had not occurred to him that there could be such a thing as an industry without art, or the practice of any art that was not at the same time a ritual going on with what had been done by God in the beginning.

The world's museums are filled with the traditional arts of innumerable peoples whose culture has been destroyed by the sinister power of our industrial civilisation: peoples who have been forced to abandon their own highly developed and significant designs in order to preserve their lives by working as hired labourers at the production of raw materials.

A democracy is a government of all by a majority of proletarians; a Soviet, a government by a small group of proletarians; and a Dictatorship, a government by a single proletarian. In the traditional and unanimous society there is a government by an hereditary aristocracy, the function of which is to maintain an existing order, based on eternal principles, rather than to impose the views or arbitrary will (in the most technical sense of the words, a *tyrannical* will) of any "party" or "interest".



GLOSSARY OF SOME INDIAN WORDS

Ahimsa

Non-violence (*a*, privative; *himsa*, violence). This is ancient Hindu precept, proclaimed by Buddha, by disciples of Vishnu, and by Mahavira, founder of Jainism.

Bhagavad Gita

The Song of the Divine Lord. This is a poem of 700 stanzas and part of the *Mahabharata*.

Dharma

Religion or religious duty.

Gandhi

Gandhi, Mohandas Karamchand (1869–1948). Known as Mahatma ("great soul"). Leader of Indian Nationalist movement; frequently fasted during six and a half years in prison; exponent and exemplar of satyagraha and ahimsa; crusader for India's Untouchables and traditional Hindu values.

Gandhiji

A title of respect for Gandhi, the *ji* corresponding to *sir* or *mister*. Sometimes the word *Mahatmaji* was used.

Gita

Song. See *Bhagavad Gita*.

Guru

A spiritual guide.

Jainism

An Indian religious system founded in 6th century B.C. by Mahavira

Mahabharata

The national epic of which Krishna is the divine hero. The *Bhagavad Gita* is part of this epic.

Mahatma

Great soul (*maha*, great; *atma*, soul).

Nandalal Bose

(1882–1966). A foremost painter.

Nataraja

Shiva as the Cosmic Dancer

Nehru

Nehru, Jawaharlal (1889–1964). Prime Minister of India 1947–1964. With Gandhi, leader of the Nationalist movement, spent nine years in jails for political "crimes"; erudite interpreter of Indian and world history; developed Indian central government and neutralist foreign policy.

Nivedita

(1867–1911). A disciple of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda.

- Raja Ravi Varma** (1848–1906). A painter whose main topics were Indian subjects but his pictures were not considered national art by some art critics.
- Sahaja** Root meaning cognate, or innate, and hence, “spontaneous” (A.K. Coomaraswamy).
- Shaivite** Devotee of Shiva.
- Siva** See Nataraja.
- Sri Ramakrishna** Sri Ramakrishna (1836–1886). Hindu mystic; devotee of the goddess Kali; experienced the spirit of Islam and Christianity, and emphasized the unity of religions; considered by many to be an avatar.
- Sri Ramana Maharshi** (1879–1950). Twentieth-century south Indian mystic; achieved spiritual realization at seventeen years of age; settled at Tiruvannamalai, where an ashram grew up around him for more than fifty years; explained spiritual realization in terms of Advaita Vedanta.
- Swadeshi** Belonging to, or made in, one’s own country (*swa*, self; *deshi*, country).
- Swaraj** Self-government; independence (*swa*, self; *raj*, government).
- Tagore** Tagore, *Rabindranath* (1861–1941) ~~Debendranath~~ (1817–1905). Close collaborator of Ram Mohan Roy; emphasized the theistic rather than monistic interpretation of the Vedas and Upanishads. *Poet of modern India*
- Uday Shankar** (1900–1977) World famous Indian dancer.
- Vedas** Earliest Hindu religious hymns.
- Vidyapati Thakur** ca 1400 AD. One of the most renowned of the Vaishnava poets of India..
- Yoga** As formulated by Patanjali and based on the Sankya system, a physical, mental, and spiritual discipline leading to *samadhi*; more generally, any one of several disciplines such as karma-yoga, jnana-yoga, bhakti-yoga, and dhyana-yoga.



SOME OPINIONS

The booklet's chief value is the insight it gives into the more intimate personality of Coomaraswamy: we see into his thoughts and aspirations, his intransigence regarding canons and principles of art, his deep love of and concern for that true India which modernized Indians would so easily betray in their blind fascination with the West's shabby materialism, and his equally profound understanding of and respect for Platonism and mediaeval Christian culture — as part of the whole Universal perspective to which his heart really belonged. But the stress on India makes this collection of extracts particularly valuable for Indians — Hindus first of all, and Muslims by extension. — Whitall N. Perry.

Among those who are responsible not only for the Indian Renaissance but for a new Renaissance in the world Dr. Ananda Coomaraswamy holds a pre-eminent position. It is my hope that students who are now led away by the passing fashions of our age will turn to his writings for a proper orientation.

— S. Radhakrishnan

Valuable to many readers who have no access to the original books

— Walter Shewring

A most interesting anthology of his 'wisdom'

— A.L. Basham

You certainly have selected the most beautiful and significant statements of this great teacher.

— Robert Ulich

This book is a compendium of some of Dr. Coomaraswamy's great thoughts culled patiently from his writings, letters and speeches by the editor. "Dr. A.K.C.'s interpretations on various subjects have been so penetrating and true. The debt we owe to Coomaraswamy is not realized by many. Coomaraswamy must not be forgotten; Coomaraswamy must be studied and remembered", observes the editor.

— S. Swaminathan,
Indian Express, Madras,
February 3, 1973.





— Drawing by Nandini Bose

Ananda K. Coomaraswamy (1877-1947)

Dr. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy is one of India's most distinguished sons of the present century. His father was Sir Mutu Coomaraswamy, the famous barrister. By profession an art critic and museum curator, Ananda Coomaraswamy was also a masterly exponent of metaphysics. A legend in his life time, he was as much at home with Plato, Aristotle and Aquinas as with Shankara and the other Vedic commentators. He was familiar with the Scriptures of all the religions. Buddhism, the Taoist masters, the Sufi poets, all came within his ken. He was a gifted interpreter of mythologies – Icelandic, Oriental and even the Gaelic lore of the Scottish Highlands. One of his favourite methods was to teach metaphysical principles by explaining the symbolism of traditional works of art. Bernard Kelly says that "he scattered the pedantries of the orientalists" and refers to the "extra-ordinary semantic power" which "gave to his writings a purity and pregnancy of which it is hard to find the equal in English."

Eric Gill in his Autobiography (Dent. London).

"There was one person, to whom I think William Rothenstein introduced me, whom I might not have met otherwise and to whose influence I am deeply grateful; I mean the philosopher and theologian, Ananda Coomaraswamy. Others have written the truth about life and religion and man's work. Others have written good clear English. Others have had the gift of witty exposition. Others have understood the metaphysics of Christianity and others have understood the metaphysics of Hinduism and Buddhism. Others have understood the true significance of erotic drawings and sculptures. Others have seen the relationships of the true and the good and the beautiful. Others have had apparently unlimited learning. Others have loved; others have been kind and generous. But I know of no one else in whom all these gifts and all these powers have been combined. I dare not confess myself his disciple; that would only embarrass him. I can only say that I believe that no other living writer has written the truth in matters of art and life and religion and piety with such wisdom and understanding."